

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 1

MARCH, 1949

50c per year
By mail to any address

THIS is the 193rd issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the seventeenth volume; and despite the quandary that many record collectors are in, the demand for fine recordings seems to be continuing. We hope that our article regarding the new RCA Victor 45 r.p.m. records, which appeared in this place last month, has clarified matters somewhat. It would seem that it has, judging from the letters we have received. In any case, it is our understanding that these new discs will be shown to the public within the next few weeks, and thus our readers may judge for themselves their importance to the record buying public.

There is no question but that RCA Victor has seen to it that they have eye-appeal; they are made of different colored transparent plastic. Each color designates a class of recording—red for classical music, cerise for hot jazz, yellow for kiddies' selections, midnight blue for popular classics, etc. A show window full of them would give a gorgeous rainbow effect. The samples that we have tried have smooth silent surfaces and the reproduction is fully equal to that of standard shellac records. They are extremely light in weight, and as they are non-breakable, they may be mailed without any special packing. As they will be made in one size only (diameter a trifle less than seven inches), they may be stored on the average book-shelf. We understand that sets of these new discs will be packed in attractively decorated cardboard boxes. It is true, as we stated last month, that the 45 r.p.m. record changer completes its cycle in less than three seconds, but the lapse of time between the ending of the music on one record and the beginning of the music on the next will be about seven seconds. These extra seconds are taken up with the stylus' travel from the last playing groove to the center of the disc, and after the change has been made, with the stylus' proceed-

ing on the feed-in groove to the first playing groove. The changer is practically silent in operation.

RCA Victor will supply a record changer to play these new discs that may be attached to your radio or phonograph at price of about \$25, and a small electric table model phonograph that will play them for about \$40. We should think that the first folks to be attracted would be the young people who are always interested in novelties, and who might like a phonograph that would be very small and easy to transport. They probably would also be attracted by the fact that the records are non-breakable and require little storage space. The modest prices will also be a factor—popular records at 65c and classical ones at 95c. All taxes are extra in both cases. After the venturesome young folks have sampled these new records, their progress will depend upon how the general record buying public accept them—only time can answer that question.

During the last few months we have been advertising THE NEW RECORDS in a number of leading newspapers throughout the country including *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Herald*, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Hundreds of new subscribers were secured by this means and we take this opportunity of welcoming them with the hope that they will continue to find our little bulletin of value. Many more persons are now reading THE NEW RECORDS than at any time during its long history.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month, so if you have not as

*Delius P 7
(Vill. Rom & Gal)*

yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues. *Chopin*. By Herbert Weinstock, x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Herbert Weinstock's definitive biographies of Tchaikovsky (published in 1944) and of Handel, which appeared two years later, have both been a great source of pleasure and information. This reviewer has referred to them again and again and numbers them among the most useful books in his reference library. Naturally he was anxious to peruse the present volume and he lost no time in doing so just as soon as the review copy was received from the publishers. He is happy to say that it fully lives up to his expectations.

Mr. Weinstock's latest biography is divided very nearly equally into two sections. The first 163 pages are devoted to Chopin's life from the cradle to the grave, and the balance of the book is devoted to the consideration of his music—item by item in chronological order—an excellent bibliography and a most comprehensive index.

We are glad to report that Mr. Weinstock has written in the first section of his book a very well-balanced account of the life of the great Polish musician. He has not allowed Chopin's association with George Sand to take a more prominent place than it should, thus relegating to obscurity other factors of importance in the life of this great man. Other writers, perhaps for sensationalism, have developed the George Sand period to a point that it so overshadows everything else that one gets a very much distorted picture. The mere facts of Chopin's association with Mme. Sand are quite sensational enough without exaggeration. Mr. Weinstock does not gloss over them—he gives us the unvarnished details. He fully appreciates the great influence that Mme. Sand had upon Chopin, and that during the period of their life together, the composer was able to produce his greatest works. He does not minimize Chopin's brilliant mistress nor does he let her steal the show.

Mr. Weinstock has doubtless spent many months, possibly years in research, for his text seems to speak with authority. We consider his book a definitive biography of Chopin.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of *THE NEW RECORDS*. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

LP RELEASES FOR FEBRUARY 1949

Concert Hall Society has just announced its entry into the LP Microgroove field this month. Careful tests have shown that these discs are in every way equal in reproduction to the Columbia discs, and we wish to call the attention of our readers to the two new releases listed below:

Vivaldi: Concerti Grossi, Op. 8 ("Le Quattro Stagioni"). Louis Kaufman (violin), Eduard Nies-Berger (organ), Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord) and the Concert Hall Society String Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (CH-AR-C). \$4.85. (TNR Jan. '49).

Khachaturian: Violin Concerto. Louis Kaufman (violin) with the Santa Monica Symphony conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 1-12" disc (CH-AN-C). \$4.85. (TNR Dec. '47).

The items listed below were scheduled for release on Columbia's LP Microgroove records in February 1949. Inasmuch as each item was reviewed previously in *THE NEW RECORDS* when the shellac pressings were released, the issue containing this review is given with each listing.

Handel: Messiah (complete recording). Huddersfield Choral Society, Isobel Baillie (soprano), Gladys Ripley (contralto), James Johnston (tenor), Norman Walker (bass) and the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent. 3-12" discs. Columbia Set SL-51. \$14.55. (TNR March '47).

Mozart: Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord (C major, K. 296; B-flat major, K. 378; G major, K. 379; E-flat, K. 302; and D major, K. 306). Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). 2-12" discs. Columbia Set SL-52. \$9.70. (TNR Feb. '47).

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov (excerpts). Ezio Pinza (basso) and Chorus of the Metropolitan Opera Association and orchestra conducted by Emil Cooper. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4115). \$4.85. (TNR July '45).

Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78 (with organ). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Charles Muench, with Eduard Nies-Berger (organ). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4120). (TNR Aug. '48).

Sacred Songs. Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4117). \$4.85. (TNR March '49).

Carnegie Pops Program. Carnegie Pops Orchestra under various conductors. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4118). \$4.85. (Formerly all single discs; see TNR Vol XV, Nos. 2, 3, 6, 8, 12 and Vol. XVI, No. 8).

Dvorák: Symphony No. 4 in G major, Op. 88. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4119). \$4.85. (TNR Oct. '48).

Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C major for String Orchestra, Op. 48. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 3 in G major, Op. 55—Theme and Variations.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4121). \$4.85. (TNR June '47 and Sept. '42).

Night Life on Two Pianos. Virginia Morley and Livingston Gearhart (duo-pianists). 1-10" disc (C-ML-2033). \$3.85. (TNR July '48).

Romance. Jane Powell (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2034). \$3.85. (TNR Jan. '49).

Chopin: Mazurkas. Maryla Jonas (piano). 1-10" disc (C-ML-2036). \$3.85. (TNR March '49).

Porter: Kiss Me, Kate. Alfred Drake, Patricia Morison and members of the original cast with chorus and orchestra conducted by Pembroke Davenport. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4140). \$4.85 (TNR March '49).

ORCHESTRA



Schumann: Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120. The London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Charles Muench. 3-12" discs in album. Decca set EDA-61. \$7.35.

You may have the feeling that another recording of the Schumann *Fourth* is nothing about which to throw your hat in the air—but most of us are learning to approach anything by Muench with respect. Once again he turns in a highly gratifying reading, one which will strike most persons as the best yet of this work. The critics commend Stock (Col. MM-475) and Walter (Vic. DM-837) with reserve—you know, "a sound performance, etc." Goossens' recent version (Vic. DM-1124) was found dull by some of them, although we thought it was highly pleasing (TNR July 1947). However, the carping will now cease in most cases, for Muench is anything but dull and prosaic, and he is aided with the best reproduction of all existing versions of the work, thanks to *ffrr* and Kingsway Hall, where the most successful *ffrr* cuttings are made.

The *Fourth* is generally considered Schumann's best; however, in recent years we have come to enjoy all four equally. They have been well represented in record catalogs and appear frequently in the concert hall and over the air. In the present recording each movement ends and the next one starts on the same record side. This is well planned, as it will be recalled that Schumann wished the work to be played without breaks. He used themes common to different movements, and playing without break strengthens this effect.

The Decca series is finally getting around to program notes on the inside album liner, and they are mighty good notes too. All the newer sets have them, for which we tender sincere thanks. S.

Scarlatti—arr. Tommasini: The Good Humoured Ladies—Ballet Suite. The London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs in album. Decca set EDA-92. \$5.25.

Born the same year as Bach and Handel, Domenico Scarlatti was renowned in his day as a great harpsichord virtuoso. Of all the works he composed in various forms, his remarkable little "sonatas" live today to remind us of his great originality. Having spent many years of his life in Spain and Portugal, we imagine the guitar music and rhythms inspired and influenced much of his sonata writing.

Six sonatas are used in this suite which Vincenzo Tommasini arranged so masterfully in the ballet made popular by the famous Ballet Russe. The orchestration is exceedingly skillful in that it is colorful and enjoyable, yet seems very fair and faithful to the period of the music. Sargent interprets with an equally fine regard for the style and niceties of the score. The fast movements trip along with light and bouncy ease, while the graceful slow movements provide contrast and a touch of sweetness. All the movements are, of course, short, as is the entire suite; and this may add to its delightful charm, for one rather wishes for more after it is all finished—better that way than too much of a good thing. Here is a nice little fillip for an idle quarter-hour, certain to prove refreshing. The reproduction is excellent, bright and with good perspective (Kingsway Hall recording). S.

Tchaikovsky: Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32. Five sides, and **Sibelius: Swan White, Op. 54—Maiden with the Roses.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-806. \$4.75.

Just about a year ago, RCA Victor released a recording of Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony, and to our way of thinking, it was just about as fine as one could wish for. We figured that the recorders would leave this selection alone for quite sometime to come; but we were wrong, as we often are. Columbia offers this month Stokowski's version with the Philharmonic-Symphony and very likely a number of music lovers will prefer it to the several recordings that

are available, including the outstanding Koussevitsky one. Stokowski, as is often his way, fondles the music, lingering over each phrase as though he were loath to leave it. Some folks like this sort of treatment and some don't; we are among those who don't.

George Gershwin Suite. Louis Levy and his Concert Orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-64. \$4.20.

If you would like to hear one of England's better light orchestras play a suite of Gershwin melodies, here is your opportunity. As far as we are concerned it is just so-so—any of a number of bands in this country could do a more interesting job. London has seen fit to import these discs so it is an easy matter for you to see whether you like them well enough to add them to your library.

The tunes that make up this suite are: *Strike Up the Band; Embraceable You; Do-Do-Do; Love Walked In* and others in a similar vein.

Falla: El Sombrero de Tres Picos—Suite No. 1. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. Four sides, and **Falla: El Sombrero de Tres Picos—Suite No. 2.** Three sides, and **Moussorgsky—arr. Rimsky-Korsakov: Khovantchina—Prelude.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Enrique Jorda. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-60. \$9.45.

This is the album for those music lovers who are intensely interested in Falla's amusing ballet "The Three-Cornered Hat." The first suite is the usual one containing: *The Neighbors; The Miller's Dance; and Final Dance*. The second suite contains: *Introduction: Afternoon; Dance of the Miller's Wife; The Corregidor; The Miller's Wife; and The Grapes*. Enrique Jorda has caught the spirit of this lively and humorous music and with the two fine orchestras at his disposal turns out some splendid recordings.

R. Strauss: Intermezzo, Op. 72—Entr'acte in A-flat. One and one-half sides, and **R. Strauss: Der Burger als Edelmann, Op. 60—Minuet of Lully.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (V-12-0735). \$1.31.

Sir Thomas has always had a real interest in the music of Richard Strauss and it is perhaps that interest that caused him to record these two brief selections. Although the music is pleasing enough, it is not of great importance, and we doubt whether this disc will enjoy a very wide sale here in America.

Copland: Billy the Kid—Prairie Night. One side, and **Copland: Billy the Kid—Celebration Dance.** Royal Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-10" disc (C-19011D). \$1.

These two selections from Copland's ballet *Billy the Kid* are based on American folk music—they are quite attractive as performed under the baton of Stokowski.

Reproduction—excellent. Not a disc to get excited about but pleasant enough in its way.

Shostakovich: The Age of Gold—Polka and Rimsky-Korsakov: The Flight of the Bumble-Bee. One side, and **Glinka: Life of the Czar—Mazurka.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 1-12" disc (C-12937D). \$1.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-101). 95c.

Three Russian selections played with fine spirit by the Philharmonic-Symphony under the brilliant direction of Efrem Kurtz—not music to get much excited about but pleasing enough in its odd way. Reproduction—good.

CONCERTO



Medtner Society Set (Vol. II). Concerto No. 3 in E minor, Op. 60 (nine sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. Sonata Vocalise, Op. 41 (three sides). Margaret Ritchie (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). Improvisation, Op. 31, No. 1 (two sides). Nicolas Medtner (piano). 7-12" discs in album (V-DB-9259 to V-DB-9265) (automatic sequence). \$18.38.

Last July we reviewed Volume I of the Medtner Society, and at that time we were genuinely enthusiastic about this man's music. Here, as well as in England, the first set was received warmly and enjoyed a surprising commercial success. Now the second volume is ready, and we are indeed pleased to say that it is as fine as the initial set.

The *Third Concerto* has not, to our ears at least, the immediate appeal of the *Second* (which appeared in the earlier set); but it is music of even greater substance, and certainly of greater originality and imagination. It is also very beautiful, as it abounds in lovely melodies which weave their way around in skillful fashion. Again we have a work which is not original in the sense that some persons consider only music which is eccentric, or modernistic, or what have you, as the basis for originality. But it is positively original in the sense that Sibelius is original—originality built on the past. It is for this very reason that Medtner's music stands a better than even chance of living for many generations. The performance of the *Third Concerto* is more than authoritative—it is brilliant, for Medtner is an astonishingly fluent pianist. Dobrowen's orchestral support is also masterly, and the reproduction is very fine.

The *Sonata-Vocalise*, based on a poem of Goethe, is unique in that the voice is treated instrumentally in a duet with the piano. After the introduction, which sets forth the poem, we have some extremely difficult vocal business with equally inventive piano work. The *Improvisation* is in theme and variation form and is not recommended for the novice to attempt. There is, however, much expressive beauty

in all this difficulty, and Medtner's playing is again something to admire. We like Medtner quite a bit, and do not hesitate to urge our readers to try his music; it is, after all, not something entirely new. It is something different—and very pleasing. S.

Brahms: Double Concerto in A minor, Op. 102. George Kulenkampff (violin), Enrico Mainardi (violoncello), with L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Carl Schuricht. 4-12" discs in album. Decca set EDA-94. \$9.45.

There have been but two previous recordings of this work, the Heifetz, Feuermann, Ormandy (Vic. DM-815) and the early Thibaud, Casals, Cortot (conducting) now deleted from the domestic catalog. From a technical standpoint the newer set is a triumph of virtuosity, for Heifetz and Feuermann are at their peak. Many feel that Thibaud and Casals plumbed the emotional depths of the work to a greater degree, but they usually admit the newer set is an all around better one. We now have another serious contender, for Kulenkampff is well remembered for many years as a fine violinist, while Mainardi has done some recording and is also a high ranking artist. There is much evidence of fine teamwork in their performance of the *Double Concerto*, as well as flights of virtuosity that encompass the enormous difficulties of this work. Kulenkampff is not quite as mercurial as Heifetz, but there is a warmth in his playing which is heartening and bespeaks sincerity. His tone is pure and pleasing and his playing always secure. Mainardi's work is technically clean and his deeper toned instrument is beautifully recorded.

The *Double Concerto* was Brahms' last concerto and the last work that he wrote for any orchestral combination. It is a unique work, reminiscent of the older concerto grosso, a blend of some chamber music principles with symphonic scoring, solo work contrasted and blended with the orchestra. Those who wish to acquire the work will be well advised to get the Heifetz-Feuermann version, with the exception of those who want to enlarge their library of fine high fidelity recordings and students who may prefer the present interpretation. In other words, you pay dearly for the values of this set. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Haydn: Quartet in C major, Op. 33, No. 3 ("The Bird"). Griller String Quartet. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-76. \$5.25.

This album should be greeted with a grand welcome for two important reasons: namely, it contains the only available recording of this lovely and fascinating Haydn quartet, and the performance is superb, entirely worthy of the music itself. The Grillers have the spirit of Haydn down deep in their hearts and English Decca caught that spirit in this marvelous recording.

If you are not familiar with this quartet, here is a

fine opportunity to make its acquaintance and under the most favorable circumstances. In listening to this charming music, you'll have no difficulty in realizing why it is called "The Bird."

Tartini: Sonata in G minor ("Il trillo del Diavolo"). Three sides, and **Bach: Cantata No. 156 ("Arioso")**—Adagio. Alfredo Campoli (violin) and Eric Gritton (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-81. \$5.25.

Corelli—arr. Leonard: Sonata in D minor, Op. 5, No. 12 ("La Follia"). Three sides, and **Paganini—arr. Kreisler: La Campanella.** Alfredo Campoli (violin) and Eric Gritton (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-82. \$5.25.

These two albums hold a feast for the lover of fine violin music. We don't know when we have heard anything so satisfying as Campoli's renditions of Tartini's "Devil's Trill" Sonata and Corelli's "La Follia" Sonata. This Italian music from the 17th and 18th centuries, in the hands of a true artist, is warming to the soul; and, in contrast to much of the jingle-jangle that is being turned out today in the name of modern music, it strikes a responding chord; at least it does in the heart of this reviewer. If you are hungry for something fine in the realm of violin music, something one does not hear every day, and played by an outstanding artist, do not fail to investigate these unusually attractive albums.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 5, F major, Op. 24 ("Frühling"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1283. \$3.50.

Several recordings of Beethoven's "Spring" Sonata have been generally available. Probably the two most important are the one by Jeno Lener and Louis Kentner, and the version by Adolf Busch and Rudolf Serkin. The former dates from 1940 and the latter appeared in the early thirties. We are quite familiar with both of them and we are very sure that the large majority of music lovers will much prefer the new recording listed above. Heifetz and Bay make a fine team, and the reproduction is of the best. The "Spring" Sonata is one of the most popular of the ten which Beethoven wrote for violin and piano; and if this item is not in your library, we suggest that you investigate the present album.

Mozart: Rondo in D major, K. 382. Edwin Fischer (piano) and his Chamber Orchestra. 1-12" disc (V-11-0031). \$1.31.

When this lovely disc arrived in the studio it was like welcoming an old friend that one had not seen in a long time. This recording was released by RCA Victor in October 1938 and remained in the catalog for several years and then disappeared. Guess RCA Victor must have been checking up on some old recordings that had particular merit, for here it is

again with a new record number (the old number was V-15185). It is charming music; and as presented by the sterling artist, Edwin Fischer, assisted by some fine string players, it makes a disc that should prove a welcome addition to any library.

OPERA



Verdi: Aida (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia (soprano); Ebe Stignani, Maria Huder (mezzo-sopranos); Beniamino Gigli, Adelio Zagonara (tenors); Gino Bechi (baritone); Tancredi Pasero, Italo Tajo (bassos); and chorus and orchestra of the Rome Opera conducted by Tullio Serafin. 20-12" discs in 2 albums. RCA Victor Set DMC-119. \$27.

The current Victor release of a complete *Aida* is the third recorded by a major company. Both Victor and Columbia have long sported an uncut performance in their catalogs, but these sets will have to give way before the up-to-date reproduction of the present albums.

Recorded in Rome about 1946, the latest *Aida* boasts some of the most glamorous names of the current operatic scene—Beniamino Gigli, Maria Caniglia, Ebe Stignani, Gino Bechi, Tancredi Pasero and Italo Tajo. After digesting this formidable list and adding to it the distinguished name of conductor Tullio Serafin, one has the right to expect a great deal.

To be truthfully accurate, the performance does not come up to expectations. It is good, but hardly a memorable one. Mr. Serafin conducts with obvious knowledge and authority, but the ultimate tumultuous excitement, the recreation of these pages for the listener, is surely missing. Just why is not easy to explain.

Beniamino Gigli is in generally good voice as Rhadames, but he hardly suggests the supreme hero of the Egyptian forces. His style and tonal features are too soft, too lush. There is no denying the beauty and cleanness of Gigli's singing, but the virility, the clarion heroics, the masculinity that should inform the role are just not there. It is ironic that Aureliano Pertile, a tenor who was supremely admired by Toscanini, but who had no success whatever at the Metropolitan, should prove a far more plausible and thrilling hero than the adulated Signor Gigli. Pertile was the Rhadames of Victor's 1927 recording.

Maria Caniglia has her ups and downs as Aida. Her temperament flames, but the tone is often hard and brittle and some of the high pianissimos of the Nile and Tomb scenes are off pitch. The high C of *O Patria mia* is also hardly a memorable note. Nevertheless, Mme. Caniglia obtains much of the right feeling, color and temperament for the part, and her voice, at its best, is one to be reckoned with. She doesn't come within striking distance, here, of her work in the *Forza del Destino* set, which remains her finest phonographic achievement.

Ebe Stignani, Italy's greatest mezzo-soprano, also runs an uneven course. Not once does this voice ring out as it did this winter from the stage of the Academy of Music in Philadelphia in *Trovatore* and *Gioconda*. Often Mme. Stignani's Amneris sounds commonplace and unimpressive. To be sure, there are moments of tonal glory and ringing high notes, as in the Judgment Scene, but there are others where the singer's voice lacks the contralto sumptuousness in the middle register; this, in spite of generously employed chest tones, which both she and Mme. Caniglia (along with many other Italian singers) quite properly feature in music of this kind.

Gino Bechi is a rough, powerful Amonasro. The baritone vividly suggests the barbaric vigor of the Ethiopian king, but the note of nobility, which should also be sounded, is rarely felt in Mr. Bechi's massive singing.

Tancredi Pasero and Italo Tajo take care of the bass roles of Ramfis and Il Re quite magnificently, while Maria Huder as the Priestess and Adelio Zagonara as the Herald complete the cast. Chorus and Orchestra of the Rome Opera sing and play with the power and feeling of groups long experienced in such music.

The recording is vivid and powerful, though on the phonograph from which this set was reviewed, there seemed to be a disturbing booming and preponderance of bass in passages of massed sound. An occasional rumble suggests that the recording was accomplished somewhere near a passing tram car. Such things as the off-stage Priestess and occasional chorus are given the added realism of distance.

You will like this new *Aida*, for it can hardly help having its distinct assets. You will like it even more if you don't expect anything in the nature of a revelatory experience.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete opera).

(Sung in Italian). Bruna Rasa (soprano), Beniamino Gigli (tenor), Gino Bechi (baritone), Maria Marcucci (mezzo-soprano), Giulietta Simionato (contralto) with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Pietro Mascagni. 11-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1139. \$14.75.

(This annotation is reprinted from the October 1947 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

From Italy comes a complete and brand-new *Cavalleria Rusticana*, whose fiery music carries with it, in this case, the aura of an historic occasion. History is here supplied by the veteran composer, Pietro Mascagni, himself, for at the age of 77 he is present during this fine recording to conduct his own opera.

On the first record side, Mascagni makes a brief but vigorous speech to the public in general, declaring that his *Cavalleria* is now 50 years old. With the knowledge that the *premiere* of the opera occurred at the Costanzi Theater in Rome on May 17, 1890, it is not hard to calculate that this recording was accomplished in 1940.

Mascagni conducts his opera with meticulous care. The *tempi* are often slower than one has become accustomed to of late, but repeated playings of the album with the score in hand will convince you finally of the logic and beauty of the composer's conception. His opera is performed just as he has written it.

The recording was made in Milan, presumably at La Scala, for the chorus and orchestra of that distinguished house were employed. *La Voce del Padrone* (His Master's Voice) gave Mascagni a free hand in the casting. Beniamino Gigli and Gino Bechi, reputedly Italy's greatest tenor and baritone, are present as Turridu and Alfio, while Lia Bruna Rasa, endorsed by Mascagni himself as the finest Santuzza of the last two decades and therefore his favorite interpreter of the role, sings the heroine's music with an authority that is unassailable.

Mme. Rasa's voice is perhaps not quite all that it was when she made records for Columbia some 20 years ago. The highest notes are sometimes pushed and unsteady, but there is no gainsaying the many lovely and compelling moments of her singing. The soprano carries the chest quality pretty high up into the middle register, but in such a role as Santuzza, this device gives the authentic color to the music and the requisite "peasant" feeling. Mme. Rasa's *Voi lo sapete o Mamma* is superbly realized and her scorn of Lola and desperation with Turridu come across in no uncertain terms. She has been, in all probability, more associated with this role than any soprano since its original interpreter, the fabulous Gemma Bellincioni.

Undoubtedly the most consistently good singing of the set is supplied by the 50-year-old Beniamino Gigli, whose bell-like brilliance of voice belies his years. Mr. Gigli's *Siciliana* is a thing of beauty, though one would have preferred him to end this lovely passage softly, as it is in truth marked *perdendosi* (losing itself). The famous tenor's final scene will probably set a standard for others to follow, while his *Brindisi* and its concluding high B fairly sparkle.

Recording is on the booming side, the lowest bass notes of the orchestra often being disturbingly emphasized. If you can turn down your bass controls, you are urged to do so. Otherwise the reproduction is an imposing job.

And so Mascagni's red-blooded little opera will go down to posterity not only as he wrote it, but also as he conceived its interpretation.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Weber: Der Freischutz—Wie nahte mir der Schlummer (recit.); and, Alles pflegt schon längst der Ruh (aria) (Act II). (Sung in German). Ljuba Welitsch (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. 1-12" disc (C-72777D). \$1.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-102). 95c.

This beautiful section from the second act of Weber's *Der Freischutz* is not listed in any of the

domestic catalogs and so this fine recording released by Columbia this month is especially welcome. Miss Welitsch gives an excellent rendition and the English technicians have accomplished a grand job of recording.



Delius: A Village Romeo and Juliet (Complete Opera). (Sung in English). Margaret Ritchie, Dorothy Bond, Lorely Dyer, Marjorie Avis, Marion Davies (sopranos); Gwendolyn Garside (mezzo-soprano); Rene Soames, Lloyd Strauss-Smith (tenors); Dennis Dowling, Frederick Sharp, Gordon Clinton, Donald Munroe (baritones); Philip Hattey (bass-baritone); and Chorus and Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 12-12" discs in 2 albums (V-DB-9306 to V-DB-9317) (automatic sequence). \$31.50.

Frederick Delius, like Mahler and Bruckner, is the center of a cult. His idolators unhesitatingly place him among the great in music; his detractors (and they are numerous) dismiss him as imitative, vague and incompetent in matters of structure.

Sir Thomas Beecham, the great English conductor, has been one of Delius' principal champions, and it is fascinating to speculate just how far Delius' music would have spread had not he had such faithful and tenacious defenders as Sir Thomas and his group.

Delius' works are little heard in America, but thanks to the Delius Society and Fellowship, much of this controversial music is available to music-lovers in this country, through the phonograph.

A Village Romeo and Juliet, here presented on 24 highly polished HMV surfaces, is Delius' fourth opera and his first recognized success in this field. It was given an initial performance in 1907 at the Komischen Oper, Berlin. It was Beecham who first presented the work to the British public in 1910.

A Village Romeo and Juliet depicts the tragic love of two young country people—Sali and Vreli—tragic because of the strife and bitterness of their parents, neighboring farmers, over an unclaimed strip of land which separates the two farms. Delius seems far more preoccupied with the state of mind which these frustrations produce than with any incident or series of incidents.

The music is richly scored in very romantic yet sophisticated style. It is flowing, melodic and passionate with the passion of *fin-de-siecle* romanticism. Delius' palette was a brilliant one, and there are passages, such as the famous interlude, known as the *Walk to the Paradise Garden*, which have a compelling sincerity and lyricism. Unlike many operatic composers, Delius seems to bother little with the musical characterization of his people. Sali, Vreli and their parents Manz and Marti, all express themselves in rather a similar manner. However, there is plenty of atmosphere and mood in this music, and the orchestral preludes that introduce the different scenes are eloquently written and fastidiously scored.

There is little flesh-and-blood about Vreli and Sali, realism such as one feels about Mimi, Carmen,

Otello and Siegfried, but there is plenty of trenchant musical comment on the conditions that envelop them.

Sir Thomas Beecham conducts with obvious enthusiasm for this often beautiful score. You feel that he thoroughly believes in this opera. The large chorus and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra do the distinguished conductor's slightest bidding.

A large cast of 15 fresh-voiced singers, unknown to this country but undoubtedly well known in England, perform a generally splendid job. René Soames and Lorely Dyer as the Lovers sing with passionate conviction. Miss Dyer sings her high C unflinchingly.

To be sure, there are echoes of *Tristan* and *Pelleas* in this music. But, after all, what music is not imitative to a certain extent? Delius speaks a language of his own, and these records should prove of great interest to people who will probably never hear an actual performance of *A Village Romeo and Juliet*.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Britten: The Rape of Lucretia (excerpts). Joan Cross, Margaret Ritchie (sopranos); Flora Neilsen (mezzo-soprano); Nancy Evans (contralto); Peter Pears (tenor); Dennis Dowling, Frederick Sharp (baritones); Norman Lumsden (bass); and Chamber Orchestra conducted by Reginald Goodall. 8-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1288. \$11.

(This annotation is reprinted from the September 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

The Rape of Lucretia is a chamber opera written for solo voices with a small orchestra, which should be composed of solo players. The action of the tragedy is framed by a male and female chorus who stand on either side of the stage and from time to time explain and comment upon what is taking place without ever becoming a part of the plot. We are very fortunate in having Peter Pears and Joan Cross, who appeared in the original production, for these important roles in the present recorded version. The other parts are in able hands and the splendid orchestra under the direction of Reginald Goodall adds greatly to the effectiveness of the performance. This recording was made under the personal supervision of the composer and issued under the auspices of the British Council.

Naturally as one listens to *The Rape of Lucretia*, he cannot help thinking of Britten's *Peter Grimes*, which was so successfully produced by the Metropolitan in New York. It would seem to us that there is much more for the average music lover to enjoy in *The Rape of Lucretia* than in *Peter Grimes*—much more of pure lyric beauty and certainly more in orchestral interludes of rare effectiveness. For example we might mention the interlude that describes Tarquinius' ride to Rome in Act I, Scene 2, and the musical description of the rape in Act II, Scene 1. Both are works of great tragic beauty and cannot help thrilling those who are in the mood for music of this character. For sheer lyric beauty we

call especial attention to the duet sung by Lucretia and her nurse Bianca at the opening of the second scene of Act II; we do not recall a more lovely selection in any opera written in the last decade or two.

All in all, we rather believe that most discerning American opera lovers will find this recording sufficiently rewarding to wish to add it to their collections. At least it is worthy of serious investigation.

R.

Bellini: Norma—Empfange diesen Schwesternkuss (Act II). One side, and **Bellini: Norma**—Casta diva (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Lilli Lehmann (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-10" disc CRS-67). \$2.10.

Verdi: La Traviata—Ah! fors' è lui (Act I). (Sung in German). One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—Sempre libera (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Lilli Lehmann (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-10" disc (CRS-68). \$2.10.

Handel: Joshua—Oh! had I Jubal's lyre. (Sung in English). One side, and **Wagner: Die Walküre**—Du bist der Lenz (Act I). (Sung in German). Lilli Lehmann (soprano) with orchestral and piano accompaniments. 1-10" disc (CRS-69). \$2.10.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro, K. 492—Heil'ge Quelle (Act II). One side, and **Meyerbeer: Les Huguenots**—O glücklich Land (Act II). (Sung in German). Lilli Lehmann (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-10" disc (CRS-70). \$2.10.

Lilli Lehmann (1848-1929) made her debut on October 20, 1865. She was probably, with Adelina Patti, the greatest soprano of her period.

These records, exceedingly well reproduced on plastic and issued by C.R.S. Historical records were originally made by the great singer in her 60th year (1907) in Berlin. Mme. Lehmann's voice is heard with the greatest clarity, and what one hears should astound the listener or connoisseur of singing.

When one considers that Mme. Lehmann had had a fabulous career as a dramatic soprano without equal when these records were made (she sang Bruennhilde, Ortrud, Venus and Isolde), the flexibility and ease of the tones that issue from these surfaces are simply astounding. Here are security and vocal authority such as we do not imagine it today. To hear a woman of 60, who has sung Ortrud, reel off the roulades and treacherous runs of *Sempre libera* from *Traviata*, the way Mme. Lehmann does, is to realize that such singing and technique were the features of a particular era.

Norma was one of the soprano's favorite roles, and here we have her *Casta Diva* with a high D in the cadenza, and a duet from the opera with her niece, Hedwig Helbig.

An example of Mozart singing—for Mme. Lehmann was considered the greatest Mozart singer of her day—is also here from *Nozze di Figaro*. The

soprano, who was one of the original Bayreuth singers (where she created roles in the Wagnerian operas under Wagner himself) can also be heard in this field, singing Sieglinde's *Du bist der Lenz* from *Walküre*.

Perhaps the most wonderful of all these records is Mme. Lehmann's account of *Oh! had I Jubal's lyre* from Handel's *Joshua*. Such scales as are heard here are only to be found in virtuoso pianists today, and the singer's breath control will come as a revelation.

Do not pass over Mme. Lehmann's wonderful trill without pondering over it. What dramatic soprano today could call on such an asset in her vocal armory?

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Operatic Arias. Alexander Sved (baritone) with Orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 3-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 114. \$6.52.

Un Ballo in Maschera—*Eri tu che macchiavi* (Act III).

Otello—*Credo in un Dio crudel* (Act II).

Otello—*Era la notte* (Act II).

Tannhauser—*O du mein holder Abendstein* (Act III).

Guglielmo Tell—*Resta immobile* (Act III).

These five arias for baritone, which include the music of Verdi, Rossini and Wagner, are admirably sung by Alexander Sved and well recorded by Cetra.

Mr. Sved is an Hungarian baritone, who studied with both Stracciari and Ruffo. He fashioned a fine career for himself in the leading theaters of Europe, including La Scala at Milan. He then came to New York, where he made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera House on the opening night of the 1940-41 season in Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*.

Oscar Thompson, writing in the *New York Sun*, had this to say about Mr. Sved the next day: "The one demonstration of consequence was that which greeted Alexander Sved, the company's new Hungarian baritone, after his singing of *Eri tu?* Mr. Sved doubtless caused some genuine commotion—he is the first big-voiced baritone the Metropolitan has had since Titta Ruffo departed. Last night he presented some slight resemblances to Ruffo, not only in the weight of the upper tones, but in the *growl* of his production. *Eri tu?* was his best achievement . . . The railbirds probably will like him immensely in the more stentorian parts."

Mr. Sved presents his version of the famous *Eri tu?* in this album. It is a solid performance, and stands up well against the many records that have been made of this aria by every famous baritone from Battistini and Ancona through Warren. Not only is the tone ample, but there are beautiful passages executed in half-voice.

The *Tannhauser* excerpt (the famous *Evening Star*) is one of the best records ever made of this popular moment, and the rarely sung aria from Rossini's *William Tell* brings out the range and power of this exceptional voice. The *Otello* numbers are

lacking in subtlety and imagination, though they are by no means devoid of virtues.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale—*Quel guardo il cavaliere* (recit.); *So anch' io la virtù magica* (aria) (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with

RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by D. Marzollo. One side, and **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**, K. 492.

—*Giunse alfin il momento* (recit.); *Deh vieni, non tardar* (aria) (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0733). \$1.31.

Opera fans in general, and Miss Albanese's admirers in particular, will doubtless welcome this fine disc. It contains two well-known arias which this truly great soprano sings to the queen's taste. She is splendidly supported by an adequate orchestra and the reproduction is first-rate

CHORAL



Musica Sacra. Schola Melurgica della Badia di Grottaferrata directed by Padre Lorenzo Tardo. 5-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 12. \$14.10.

This album contains unique recordings of Byzantine music as expressed in the authentic religious music of the ritual of the Greek Orthodox Church. This music, the equivalent in the Church of the East of the Gregorian Chant in the Church of the West, is far less known than the latter and only of recent years has come to the attention of musicologists.

The sacred music of the Greek ritual is found today in its original purity, not in its countries of origin, not in Greece or in the Balkans where, under centuries of Turkish domination, it was exposed to Arab and Persian influences and adorned with the excessive ornamentation of the East, but in Italy. In Sicily, and throughout Puglia and Calabria in the South of Italy, there exist colonies of Albanians transplanted centuries ago to Italian soil who have preserved intact their language and customs, and, at the same time, their religious music—ethnic islands, immune to all outside influences.

The religious and cultural center of these Albanian colonies is the Abbey of Grottaferrata, founded about a thousand years ago by Saint Nilo who came there from the East and who died in the monastery in the year 1004. The Abbey contains a school of Byzantine music which has conserved and kept alive throughout the centuries the original purity of the sacred song ritual of the Greek Church. Today the moving spirit of the school is Padre Lorenzo Tardo through whose initiative these recordings, the first examples of their kind, were made in Italy and are now available to the public.

The melodies, strange at first to the Western ear in their apparent uniformity, descend intact from origins hundreds of years old. Purely vocal and "monodic" like the Gregorian Chant, they do not

permit any form of accompaniment of polyphony, except occasionally for a characteristic device called "Ison," i.e., the holding of one note by one section of the chorus, which serves to keep the fundamental tonality in the midst of the labyrinth of vocalization and of ornamentation—in technical terms, a sort of vocal "pedal." But once the ear is accustomed to the richness of these ancient modes, it yields little by little to the beauty of the simple, century-old, exotic music.

The foregoing information was taken directly from the leaflet that accompanies these imported Italian records. We believe that this unusual album will be of interest to many of our readers and we are glad to state that the recording throughout is highly satisfactory—some of the record-surfaces are a trifle more noisy than the best domestic discs.

VOCAL



Sacred Songs. Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-807. \$7.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4117). \$4.85.

Mendelssohn: *Elijah*—"Oh, rest in the Lord"; and "Hear ye, Israel!"

Handel: *The Messiah*—"He shall feed His flock"; and "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Bach: *Komm, süsser Tod.*

Handel: *Xerxes*—"Largo."

Handel: *Israel in Egypt*—"Dank sei dir, Herr."

Bizet: *Agnus Dei.*

An album of *Sacred Songs* by Helen Traubel presents the eminent American soprano and makes clear a number of things. It is no secret that Mme. Traubel, for the last three years, has been having trouble with her top notes. Transpositions downward and omission of high notes have been frequent in all her Wagnerian roles at the Metropolitan of late.

The reason for this is quite apparent when you hear this album. Mme. Traubel is in reality now a contralto, at best a mezzo-soprano. Her singing of *Oh, rest in the Lord, He shall feed His flock*, *Bizet's Agnus Dei* and other numbers of the contralto repertoire, is accomplished with a richness and opulence that would put many an ordinary contralto to shame. Mme. Traubel reaches a low A with perfect ease and no loss of quality in Bach's *Komm, süsser Tod*, which is by far her finest accomplishment in this collection.

Mme. Traubel has a fine oratorio style. Her singing has maturity and dignity, and she treats the vocal line with reverence. Her singing of Handel's celebrated *Largo* recalls a magnificent record made in the acoustical era by the late Louise Homer. The singer's voice is perhaps too bulky for *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. Lucy Marsh had the perfect voice

for the recording of this number, as far as this writer is concerned. *Hear Ye Israel!* is presented in the true grand manner.

Speaking of the grand manner, Helen Traubel is one of the very few native singers who has preserved this particular style.

An orchestra conducted with care by Charles O'Connell (the author of the provocative *The Other Side of the Record*) supports the singer's grandiose tones with happy results. Recording is excellent.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Porter: Kiss Me, Kate. Alfred Drake, Patricia Morison, and the original cast with chorus and orchestra conducted by Pembroke Davenport. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set C-200. \$7. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4140). \$4.85.

There doesn't seem to be much of a question but that "Kiss Me, Kate" is the big musical hit of the present New York season. It played a short engagement in Philadelphia before it moved on to Broadway, and we who saw it found it an amusing, gay and a thoroughly sophisticated vehicle for the very talented musical actor, Alfred Drake. Mr. Drake was ably supported by Patricia Morison and an excellent cast and chorus. This fine group of players were secured for the present recording and those who have enjoyed the play should certainly find this album highly attractive. Dealers in both Philadelphia and New York report that this album is selling faster than any such item has sold within the last several years.

Columbia has done a great job and has included nearly all of the musical numbers in its album—in addition to the Overture and the Finale there are sixteen selections.

Boyce: The Song of Momus to Mars. One side, and **Vaughan Williams: Orpheus with His Lute.** Roy Henderson (baritone) accompanied by Eric Gritton (piano). 1-10" disc (D-M-583). \$1.05.

There is more than a century between these two English songs (William Boyce 1710-1779 and Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872-) and yet there is a rare similarity in their style. They are typical of 18th century ballads and those who enjoy music of this character are urged to investigate them. Roy Henderson has a beautiful voice and his almost perfect diction, an important matter in songs such as these, makes these recordings highly interesting. Reproduction—excellent.

Hawthorne: Whispering Hope. One side, and **Monk: Abide with Me.** Eleanor Steber (soprano) and Margaret Harshaw (contralto) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1463). \$1.05

A quarter of a century ago Alma Gluck and Louise Homer made recordings of both of these selections and it is too bad that the present artists did not study those truly artistic renditions before the present disc was waxed. Russ Case did not help matters any when he added orchestra bells and chimes to the

accompaniment he has supplied. Tastes have changed since Gluck and Homer sang these old favorites but whether it has changed for the better is very much of a question. Up-to-the-minute funeral homes will probably think the present disc is just too-too.

Songs from Lehar Operettas. (Sung in German). Max Lichtegg (tenor) with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-63. \$7.35.

To those who have had the opportunity of hearing the Lehar operettas in their original German these discs will bring back many nostalgic memories—perhaps a gay night in pre-war Vienna or Berlin. Max Lichtegg is to the manner born and his presentations of these selections is in the best tradition of the Viennese musical theatre. The Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra supplies typical accompaniments that add to the atmosphere.

The selections contained in this unusual album are: Maxim's from "The Merry Widow;" Polenlied from "The Blue Mazurka;" Zorika, Zorika and Lied und Czardas from "Gypsy Love;" Gern hab' Ich die Frauen gekusst from "Paganini;" and Wolgalied from "Zarewitsch."

R. Strauss: Morgen, Op. 27, No. 4. One side, and **R. Strauss: Befreit, Op. 39, No. 4.** Marian Anderson (contralto) with Franz Rupp (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0734). \$1.31.

Miss Anderson sings these Strauss songs in her usual truly artistic manner and her many admirers will very likely welcome this disc warmly. There are numerous recordings of *Morgen* but we fail to find any present listing of *Befreit*; thus this record is of unusual interest to collectors of lieder.

Huhn: Invictus. One side, and **Clarke: The Blind Ploughman.** Robert Merrill (baritone) accompanied by Leila Edwards (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1462). \$1.05.

These two well-known selections appear often on Mr. Merrill's programs and are always received with much enthusiasm. RCA Victor has caught them on this disc with great accuracy and we are sure that the singer's many admirers will be well pleased with these recordings.

PIANO



Vivaldi-Bach—arr. Lev: Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11. Three sides, and **J. E. Bach: Fantasy and Fugue in F.** Ray Lev (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Concert Hall Society Set AH. \$5.25.

Edward Tatnall Canby in the notes that he supplied for this album says: "The present Concerto is a good illustration of the art of transcription. In its original form it is one of a set of concerti grossi, opus 3, subtitled *L'Estro Harmonico*. It was transcribed by

J. S. Bach as an organ concerto for two manuals and pedal, one of a number of Vivaldi works he treated in this manner. Unfortunately the title page of the Bach came loose and was lost; Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, who was notoriously careless in his treatment of his father's manuscripts, wrote his own name on it, and the implication that the music was by W. F. Bach was actually perpetuated into the 20th century, when at last the concerto was rightly ascribed dually to Vivaldi and J. S. Bach.

"Ray Lev's transcription of the Vivaldi-Bach organ concerto shows what can be done by a pianist who knows the intention and the mechanics of the original music as well as the potentialities of the piano for reproducing them."

Miss Lev is not only a very fine concert pianist but an erudite musician as well, with many published scores to her credit. She demonstrates both of these talents very ably on these superb discs. The *Fantasy and Fugue in F* of Johann Ernst Bach, a cousin once removed in the generation of Johann Sebastian's sons, which occupies the fourth side of this pair of discs, is an interesting and pleasing unusual bit of 18th century music.

We must add a special postscript to praise particularly the piano reproduction that Concert Hall has achieved in these recordings—the discs are unbreakable plastic with silent surfaces.

Mozart: Sonata No. 12 in F major, K. 332. Three sides, and **Bach—arr. Busoni: Nun komm', der Heiden Heiland** (Peters Vol. VII, No. 42). Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1284. \$3.50.

Kabalevsky: Sonata No. 3, Op. 46. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1282. \$3.50.

This month Horowitz spans a century and a half—from Mozart to Kabalevsky, and in our opinion he fares better with the modern Russian than with the 18th century melodist. It seems to us that he probably recorded the Kabalevsky sonata first and that he carried over into the Mozart selection some of the martial rhythm of that work—a treatment that is not appropriate. It is hard to imagine two composers who are farther apart than Kabalevsky and Mozart and it would be an extremely versatile artist who could play both extremely well. Casadesus has already recorded the Mozart sonata for Columbia and has given us a very satisfactory version of that lovely piece; therefore we will direct our attention to the Kabalevsky selection.

Horowitz was the first to play this work in America; he introduced it in 1947 after its initial performance in Moscow early in that year. He was also the first to play Kabalevsky's *Sonata No. 2, Op. 45* in U. S.; he introduced that to an American audience in 1945 several months before it had its Moscow premiere. It would seem that he is particularly interested in the music of that important Russian com-

poser, who, with Shostakovich, Prokofieff and Khat-chaturian comprise the outstanding Russian composers of the present-day.

Although Kabalevsky has written much in many forms, little of his music has reached America and he is sparsely represented in our record catalogs; therefore, Horowitz's splendid recording of his Third Sonata for piano is very welcome. It is music that can be easily appreciated, and if you are to like it at all you will enjoy it at the first hearing. It is to some extent based on folk tunes—we seemed to sense the Volga Boat Song at one point—also it is said that its martial rhythms are a salute to the Russian people upon their victory in World War II. We would say that it is in the spirit that Uncle Joe Stalin is trying so hard to instill into his people and we should think that it should have his sincere blessing. We would hardly say that it is a great work or that it is one that is likely to live through the ages. It is, however, typical of our time and may live as an example of the music of the present period in world history.

The piano reproduction in both albums listed above has been most successfully achieved by RCA Victor.

R.

Chopin: Etude No. 3 in E major, Op. 10, No. 3. One side, and **Chopin: Etude No. 15 in F major, Op. 25, No. 3**, and **Chopin: Etude No. 5 in G flat major, Op. 10, No. 5 ("Black Keys")**. Byron Janis (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0431). \$1.31.

This disc gives an opportunity of hearing the young pianist, Byron Janis, whose New York debut at Carnegie Hall last year caused nothing less than a sensation. As we listened to Mr. Janis, we could not help thinking of the poetry of the playing of Walter Gieseking; and that to us is very high praise for this new twenty-year-old young artist. RCA Victor has been most successful with the piano reproduction in this instance.

Chopin: Mazurkas. Maryla Jonas (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-810. \$4.75. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2036). \$3.85.

Miss Jonas, who was born in Poland and made her American debut in 1946, is acclaimed by many critics as the greatest woman interpreter of her compatriot, Chopin. For this attractive album, she has chosen nine of the fifty-one mazurkas from the pen of that great composer for the piano. We rather believe that most music lovers will feel that her choices have been good ones and that she presents them with an artistry that is indeed fascinating. Columbia has achieved splendid piano reproduction.

The mazurkas in this album are: Nos. 16, 18, 21, 27, 29, 35, 48, 50 and the one in G major, Op. posth.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Harold Bauer, His Book. By Harold Bauer. 306 pp. Illustrated. W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York). Price \$3.75.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Olseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunkens, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 2

APRIL, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

A REMARKABLE tool has recently come to our attention called the Dunwel Record Repair Tool, the function of which is to repair the center holes of records which have become chipped or otherwise damaged through use on a record changer. The tool places a pair of aluminum discs around the hole and presses them firmly (and permanently) into place, making the record as good as new.

After making careful tests with this tool we find that it is quite satisfactory for the above purpose, and we heartily recommend it to our readers. The publishers of this bulletin have secured a number of these tools, and if your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co. will be promptly filled. The Dunwel Tool, complete with instructions and five sets of "Dura-Discs," is 98¢ (plus 15¢ postage in continental U. S. A.). Additional "Dura-Discs" come twenty-two to the packet at \$1 (postpaid in U. S. A.).

* * *

As several shipments of records from abroad have arrived since our last issue, and as our space is limited, we will omit any further editorial matter and proceed with as many record reviews as possible.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

LP RELEASES FOR MARCH 1949

The items listed below were scheduled for release on Columbia's LP Microgroove records in March 1949. Inasmuch as each item was reviewed previously

in THE NEW RECORDS when the shellac pressings were released, the issue containing this review is given with each listing.

Shakespeare: Othello. Paul Robeson, Uta Hagen, José Ferrer, and Edith King with supporting cast. 3-12" discs. Columbia Set SL-53. \$14.55. (TNR Jan. '45).

Menotti: The Medium and The Telephone (complete operas). (Sung in English). Evelyn Keller, Marie Powers, Beverly Dame, Frank Rogier, Catherine Mastice, and orchestra conducted by Emanuel Balaban. 2-12" discs. Columbia Set SL-54. \$9.70. (TNR April '48).

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A major, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. One side, and Mendelssohn: Capriccio Brilliant, Op. 22. Joanna Graudan (piano) with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4127). \$4.85. (TNR April '49 and July '41).

Beethoven: Trio No. 4 in D Major, Op. 70, No. 1 ("Ghost"). Adolf Busch (violin), Hermann Busch (violoncello), and Rudolf Serkin (piano). One side, and Beethoven: Fantasia in G minor, Op. 77 and Beethoven: Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp major, Op. 78. Rudolf Serkin (piano). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4128). \$4.85. (TNR Feb. '49 and April '49).

Stravinsky: Symphonie des Psalms. Mixed chorus and Columbia Broadcasting Symphony conducted by Igor Stravinsky. One side, and **Stravinsky: Symphony in Three Movements.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4129). \$4.85. (TNR April '49 and June '47).

Music of Richard Rodgers. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4130). \$4.85. (TNR Feb. '47).

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4131). \$4.85. (TNR July '48).

By Request. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2037). \$3.85. (TNR June '45).

Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46. One side, and **Liszt Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1 in F minor and Liszt—trans. Müller-Berghaus: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4132). \$4.85. (TNR May '48, Jan. '49, and Jan. '47).

Brahms: Hungarian Dances. One side, and **Strauss: Rosen aus dem Suden, Op. 388 and Wiener Blut, Op. 354 and Schatz-Walzer, Op. 418** (from "Der Zigeunerbaron"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4116). \$4.85. (TNR April '49, July '42 and Aug. '41).

ORCHESTRA



Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504 ("Prague"). L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 3-12" discs in album. Decca set EDA-91. \$7.35.

Our fondness for Mozart's symphonies extends to many of his works in this form, but there seems to be an especial feeling for the wonderful "Prague." Perhaps it is the three-movement form that fascinates, or the racy final movement. Whatever it is, there is always a lift and a tingle upon hearing this work. Criticism is therefore difficult of any performance which is knowing and forthright, such as the present one. Again, criticism of this particular set is hampered by the recollection of hearing Ansermet perform this work with the Philadelphia Orchestra at a subscription concert just one month ago (as this is being written). Also on the program was Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale*, Fauré's *Pelléas and Mélisande* Suite, and an unforgettable reading of Debussy's *La Mer*. What a feast, and all of it magnificently conducted! His Decca recordings had impressed us greatly, but the concert in person convinced us he is one of the truly great conductors of our day. The audience tendered an immense ovation (and so did the orchestra members, who seemed to love him no less!).

Enough of reporting. The album at hand is not quite at the top of Decca's *ffrr* efforts, although the reproduction is very satisfactory and better than half our domestics. The orchestra is not Philadelphia, but it is a good ensemble, lacking somewhat in subtlety. They do have a good measure of precision, and they play enthusiastically. You will hear many more of their recordings, so final judgment is not necessary on this one set. Ansermet's reading is eminently sound, the overall effect is first in his mind, and it is a genuine product. The reading is classic, with the details well in the framework and not exaggerated. It is fine Mozart all the way. If you never went beyond the 40th in G minor, or have by chance missed the *Prague*, by all means acquire it. This version is preferable; Beecham (Col. MM-509) and Golschmann (Vic. DM-1085) are also very fine.

S.

Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzsky. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1268. \$2.62.

Liszt: Les Preludes. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1277. \$2.62.

(Two-pocket plain albums are available for these sets at 65c each.)

RCA Victor has decided to place its two-record sets in envelopes, for which there is no charge, instead of in two-pocket albums as heretofore. There is the saving to the buyer of the cost of the album but we are of the opinion that most record collectors would prefer the album despite the added expense. We presume that this procedure is in the nature of an experiment and that if it does not please the public a change will be made. We surely hope that, if anything is done, RCA Victor will go back to albums, not to those pasteboard boxes that no one likes. The various record manufacturers have tried all sorts of methods of housing records but it is pretty generally conceded that the most satisfactory is the old-fashioned album that has been used practically since the beginning of recorded music.

The two items listed above are the first sets to appear in envelopes. The description of the selections is printed on the back of the envelope. If anyone wishes to, he may secure a plain two-pocket album and paste this annotation on the inside of the cover.

Both of the present recordings are excellent in every way. Koussevitzsky is noted for his interpretation of Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite* and Liszt's brilliant *Les Preludes* is just the sort of selection that Stokowski can do to the queen's taste. Reproduction in both cases is of the very best. There is no question but that these versions are far superior to any that are presently available.

Schumann: Manfred, Op. 115—Overture. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Die Weihe des Hauses—Overture, Op. 124 ("Consecration of the House").** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1287. \$4.75.

Toscanini realizes that future generations will judge him from his recordings and so for some time he has only recorded selections that particularly appeal to him and ones that he feels that he does very well. It was fortunate for present music lovers that he chose Schumann's *Manfred Overture* and Beethoven's *Consecration of the House Overture* for both of them can stand a modern recording and are selections that will fit into practically any record library. He has done them superbly and RCA Victor has achieved marvelous recordings from a technical point of view.

In case you may have forgotten, we might mention that Schumann was so deeply impressed with Byron's poem that he thought that it might be presented in dramatic form with an appropriate musical background. Schumann prepared the score, but nothing

came of the idea; all but the overture has long since been forgotten. Beethoven's "Consecration of the House" is the last overture from that great composer's pen and was commissioned for the opening of the Joseph Theatre, which took place in Vienna on October 3, 1822. The play by Meisl that was given on that occasion has disappeared but Beethoven's overture has marched down through the years—it is majestic music, solemn and stately, and just the sort of piece that anyone with taste may enjoy.

Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps—Ballet. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-59. \$9.45.

Every music lover does not care for Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, but whether it is universally liked or not, it is now, some thirty-five years after its composition, generally conceded to be a work of outstanding merit.

Those who appreciate it and regard it highly acclaimed the RCA Victor recording of it (V-DM-1052) that was released just a year ago performed by the San Francisco Symphony under the distinguished and brilliant direction of Pierre Monteux. M. Monteux conducted the first performance in Paris in 1913 and his name has been associated with this unique composition ever since. When the RCA Victor version was made available last March, the critics were one in high praise of it and the consensus was that a definitive recording had been achieved.

Thus the present album by the Concertgebouw Orchestra under Beinum, which recently arrived from abroad, will be up against mighty formidable competition. In our opinion, there was really no good reason to import it. True, it is a fine high-fidelity recording and received much praise from the foreign critics, but we doubt whether one record collector in a hundred would choose it if it were the same price as the domestic version. However, as the imported price is considerably higher, we rather believe that the sale of this item will be very small indeed.

Griffes: The White Peacock, Op. 7 No. 1. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 1-10" disc (C-19012D). 89c. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-117). 95c.

Stokowski offers an exquisite performance of this delicate Griffes selection. It is just too bad that it appears on two sides of a 10-inch shellac disc. That probably could not be helped because the selection is too long for one side of a 12-inch record. The great regret is that it was placed on two sides of a 7-inch LP disc when it could have very nicely been placed on one side of a 10-inch LP one. It is the sort of music that loses much of its charm by any interruption. It is definitely "mood music" and when one is in the spell of it he resents being disturbed by being forced to get up and turn over the record.

One of the greatest advantages of LP discs is that one may hear such selections complete on one side of a record. Please watch this in the future, dear Mr. Columbia.

Brahms: Eight Hungarian Dances. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-309. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove coupled with Strauss: *Rosen aus dem Suden*, Op. 388 and *Wiener Blut*, Op. 354 and *Schatz-Walzer*, Op. 418 (from "Der Zigeunerbaron"): 1-12" disc (CML-4116). \$4.85.

Fritz Reiner, a Hungarian himself, has selected eight of the twenty-one Hungarian Dances of Brahms for this album, and he certainly gives them lively performances in the true spirit of the music. We cannot imagine better renditions. As the pieces are short, two of them will be found on each side of this pair of discs. Columbia has supplied excellent reproduction throughout. If music of this character appeals to you, Reiner is your man and this album should surely find favor with you.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier Waltzes. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0762). \$1.31.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsory No. 2 in C-sharp minor. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0763). \$1.31.

We were surprised when these discs arrived at the studio—we thought surely that the Boston "Pops" had made recordings of these popular selections long ago but a check of the catalogs failed to reveal any. They are both just the sort of things that this famous orchestra does to perfection and we feel sure the present discs will enjoy a wide sale.

Coates: London Suite. Three sides, and **Coates: London Again Suite.** New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-46. \$7.35.

These two suites are among Eric Coates' best-known works—recordings of them have been available in this country for several years and have enjoyed reasonable popularity. Both of them in one album with the composer conducting should prove to be an attractive item for those who do not mind the rather high price for light music of this character.

The London Suite is made up of the following pieces: *Covent Garden* (Tarantelle); *Westminster* (Meditation); and *Knightsbridge* (March). London Again Suite consists of: *Oxford Street* (March); *Langham Place* (Elegie); and *Mayfair* (Valse).

Concert in Tivoli. Tivoli Promenade Orchestra conducted by Elo Magnussen. 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-68. \$3.94.

A month or so ago London released in this country an album entitled "A Night in Tivoli," which contained a number of selections by Hans Christian

Lumbye (1810-1874), known to Europeans as the "Danish Strauss." It caught on pretty well over here and so we have another album containing more selections by the same composer. The music is not of much importance but it is very tuneful and pleasing to listen to. The pieces this time are: *Amelie Waltz*; *Columbine Mazurka*; *Hostblomsten Polka*; and *Kroll's Ballklange*.

Debussy: Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un faune. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sidney Beer, featuring Arthur Gleghorn (flute). 1-12" disc (D-K-1037). \$2.10.

Mendelssohn: Ruy Blas—Overture, Op. 95. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinz Unger. 1-12" disc (D-K-1326). \$2.10.

Mendelssohn: The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26 ("Fin-gal's Cave"). National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Heinz Unger. 1-12" disc (D-K-1120). \$2.10.

These three imported discs feature one of England's outstanding orchestras and further demonstrate the high fidelity of English Decca's *ffrr* reproduction. All of the selections are well-known and many recordings of them are presently available.

Grainger: Molly on the Shore. One side, and **Grainer: Irish Tune from County Derry.** Carnegie "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-12" disc (C-7628M). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-122). 95c.

This is one that we can't get very much excited about. The reproduction seems muddy; and the performance lacks variety, the only attribute that could save these tunes from being downright dull.

Strauss: Rosen aus dem Süden, Op. 388 ("Roses from the South"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-12941D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-120). 95c.

Among his many musical talents, Fritz Reiner has a real flair for Johann Strauss waltzes and this is ably demonstrated on this grand disc. Splendid reproduction is an added feature.

CONCERTO



Falla: Concerto for Harpsichord and Chamber Orchestra. Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord) with Alexander Schneider (violin), Mitchell Miller (oboe), Samuel Baron (flute), Harold Freeman (clarinet), and Bernard Greenhouse (violoncello). 2-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-5. \$3.92.

We just cannot see why Mercury decided to issue another recording of Falla's unusual concerto. It is a work that appeals only to a very limited number of music lovers and a recording of it with the composer

at the harpsichord has been in the Columbia catalog since it was first released in 1931; as far as we know the sales have been few and far between.

However, we compared the present recording with the ancient one and there is no question but that it is far superior in every way—Kirkpatrick is a much greater harpsichordist than Falla and the modern recording is so much better that there is really no comparison. If you are interested in this unique work, by all means order the Mercury version.

To tell the truth, we had quite forgotten this bit of chamber music until this new album arrived in the studio. Perhaps a few words about it might be interesting, especially to our younger readers, who very likely have never heard of it. Among them there may be some venturesome ones who will wish to investigate it.

It appears that in 1922, Wanda Landowska, to whom this composition is dedicated, was on a tour of Spain with her harpsichord, and paid Falla a visit. He was at work on his puppet opera (*El Retablo de Maese Pedro*) in which he wished to use some ancient instrument. Landowska modestly suggested the harpsichord. He became interested in the instrument and thus we have the present Concerto, which is a concerto in the same sense that his *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* is a concerto for piano and chamber orchestra. In both cases the principal instrument plays an integral part in the score.



CHAMBER MUSIC

Mozart: Quartet No. 19 in C major, K. 465 ("Dissonant"). Seven sides, and **Purcell—trans. Warlock: Four-Part Fantasie, No. 3.** Griller String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-97. \$9.45.

After a Mozart concert at which three quartets were played (K-458, 464, 465), Mozart's father quoted Haydn as saying, "I declare to you before God as a man of honour, that your son is the greatest composer that I know, either personally or by reputation; he has taste, and beyond that the most consummate knowledge of the art of composition." In the face of such flowering praise, Mozart promptly dedicated these, and three more quartets (K-387, 421, 428) to Haydn, claiming in return, "It is but his due, for from Haydn I first learned how to compose a quartet." This is, in some measure, true, but he never learned from Papa Haydn the intrinsic Mozartian originality which never ceases to astound the musical world. As a matter of fact, "originality" is much too mild a word for the introduction to the quartet here presented. This introduction, dubbed by Slonimsky as "ambiguous," is certainly the most remarkable passage in all of Mozart's writing. Students of music are perhaps familiar with the *Musical Joke*, in which Mozart, to amuse his friends, makes use of unusual combinations of chromatics, but in this introduction, unconventional harmonies which have only recently come to be accepted

as logical and musical are used with effective seriousness and great dignity. Haydn, evidently unimpressed by the introduction, must have certainly been impressed with the typically Mozartian three movements that follow.

An up-to-date recording of this charming quartet has been needed for many years, and in our opinion the Griller Quartet has supplied a very acceptable one. It is far superior to the Kolisch Quartet version that was issued by Columbia in 1941; whether it is more to be desired than the recording by the Budapest String Quartet, a very early one released by RCA Victor (V-DM-285), is a question that each chamber music lover must decide for himself.

Mozart: Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord, Vol. II (E-flat, K. 302; D major, K. 306). Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-811. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove in Columbia Set SL-52, \$9.70.

In our February 1947 issue we reviewed the first volume of these Mozart sonatas (that volume contained C major, K. 296; B flat major, K. 378; and G major, K. 329), and what S. had to say about the first group applies fully to those in the second volume listed above. Among other things he said:

"Unquestionably one of the finest albums we have ever heard. This album came to us as somewhat of a surprise, for we did not expect to hear such remarkable teamwork as well as such individual mastery. These two men play together as nearly perfectly as can be imagined. Schneider is a violinist of the first order, and he handles his Mozart with dash and brilliance, poetry in the sustained slow movement and all of it framed in a thoroughly appropriate and musicianly style. Anyone who has any affection for violin music cannot help being thrilled with this album. To us it was far more refreshing than hearing a virtuoso performance of one of the oft-played concertos. Mozart is always a most palatable dish for us; yet there is something commanding about these violin and harpsichord records that seems so new and interesting. The harpsichord is infinitely more colorful than a piano for sonata work and Kirkpatrick provides a splendid exposition of these scores."

Alert readers caught us last month when we listed the LP release of this item in our LP column. In that listing we referred our readers to the February 1947 issue, which of course reviews only Volume I of this series. The present set is Volume 2, and the LP release contains all the sonatas found in both volumes.

Bartók: Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) and Adolph Baller (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1286. \$6.

Those who do not like chamber music will do well to steer clear of this work. But for those who are responsive to chamber music and are sensitive to the message contained in a sonata, Bartók's *Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano* will unquestionably stir them

deeply, at least by the third hearing. It is a taut work, with a hard surface but underlying emotions firmly embedded. From the opening bars one is aware that Hungary's great composer (1881-1945) has a vigorous and turbulent message. With the violin and piano in equal roles, the work proceeds from the tense first movement, through a broad, sometimes lyric second movement, to the almost barbaric finale. The finale is quite a masterpiece of rhythm and reveals the hand of a great master.

Yehudi Menuhin has long been recognized as a knowing interpreter of Bartók. With Adolph Baller fully equal to his part, we have a performance that is highly communicative. This is a first recording of the *Sonata No. 1*, and is a credit to all concerned. The reproduction is excellent; surfaces of our set satisfactory.

S.

Schubert: Octette in F major, Op. 166. Vienna Octet. 6-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-104. \$13.65.

There are not many albums of chamber music that could more safely and enthusiastically be recommended than this altogether delightful recording of Schubert's Octet for string quartet, contrabass, clarinet, bassoon and French horn. There are those who find the ordinary string quartet somewhat unsatisfying; the effect, they claim, tends to wear thin after an hour or so. But no criticism could be applied to the Octet. The contrabass adds body and the clarinet, horn and bassoon color to the music. There is thus plenty of variety and contrast, and though the work is rather long—it runs to twelve record sides—there are not many hearers who would venture to criticize it for its excessive length. It is in six movements, all of them charming and full of melodies of the utmost loveliness. The whole thing flows simply and spontaneously, and not a bar seems labored or forced. The clarinet part has great prominence, perhaps because it was commissioned by Count Ferdinand von Troyer, a noted amateur clarinetist. In the present recording there is some fine horn playing by J. Veleba of the famous Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. The entire performance is admirable, full of life and high spirits.

The only other recording of this work that we remember ever having heard was made by the Lener String Quartet and added artists. That version was released by Columbia nearly twenty years ago.

Brahms: Quartet No. 3 in C minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 60. Seven sides, and Mendelssohn: Quartet No. 2 in F minor for Piano and Strings, Op. 2—Intermezzo. Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano), Alexander Schneider (violin), Milton Katims (viola), and Frank Miller (violoncello). 4-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-9. \$6.53.

This is the first satisfactory recording of Brahms' *Quartet No. 3 for Piano and Strings*. The first recording that we know of was made by N.G.S. in England in 1928 and the second was released by Columbia in 1934 (Columbia Set M-198). Neither of these versions are presently available, and if they were, we are sure that they would not be considered at all satis-

factory. Thus this Mercury album is of prime importance to all music lovers who are interested in chamber music.

The present work has never gained great popularity, perhaps because of its dramatic and somber nature. However, it is considered a finely wrought composition and the discerning music lover will surely find it rewarding. The performance in the present instance is excellent and the reproduction is of the best.

Hüe: Fantasie for Flute and Piano. Julius Baker (flute) and Sidney Raphael (piano). 1-12" disc (W-503). \$1.58.

Although the French composer and teacher, Georges-Adolphe Hüe (1858-) has a long list of compositions to his credit, little of his music has been recorded—except for a few songs we do not know of any other recordings. This little fantasie is pleasing enough but we doubt whether it will be of interest to the average music lover. Those who are particularly interested in flute recordings might find it worth their while to try it. The record surfaces and the reproduction are satisfactory.



OPERA

Roig: Cecilia Valdes—Excerpts. Martha Perez (soprano), Aida Pujol (mezzo-soprano), Ruth Fernandez (Afro-Cuban singer), and Francisco Naya (tenor), with orchestra and chorus conducted by Gonzalo Roig. 4-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 115. \$8.36.

For people surfeited with leafless and trying winter months who perchance long for a trip to the Caribbean or some semi-tropic clime, this album should contain just what the doctor ordered.

Here you will find all the sunshine and warm, provocative rhythms, which are the joint inheritance from Spanish and African sources, in Gonzalo Roig's Cuban operetta, *Cecilia Valdes*.

There is an odd mixture of influences in this fetching little score: Afro-Cuban drumbeats and savagery; Spanish and Mexican dance-rhythms, and straight romantic music, which stems from continental Europe, even though seen through the sheen of a Caribbean sun.

A Cuban cast and orchestra, under the direction of the composer, performs *Cecilia Valdes* with plenty of know-how.

Ruth Fernandez, an Afro-Cuban singer with a voice like a baritone does some extraordinary work in the arresting *Po, Po, Po* and *Tanila*, while a soprano of obviously operatic equipment, Martha Perez, sings the title-role richly and with obvious relish. Francisco Naya—a tenor who appeared with the Philadelphia-La Scala Opera Company in *Tosca* and *Cavalleria* during the season of 1941-42—blends his hefty top tones with Señorita Perez in the long love-duet, *El Corazon*

no Sabe Mentir. Aida Pujol, a fine mezzo, sings the *Lamento de la Esclava* (*The Slave's Lament*), with excellent results.

For people who are weary of their albums and yearn for something new, we would warmly urge an investigation of these records. The recording is of great clarity and brilliance.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana—*Tu qui Santuzza?* One side, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana**—*No, No, Turiddu*. (Sung in Italian). Sara Scuderi (soprano) and Aldo Ferracuti (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-C-3769). \$2.

This recording covers most of the scene wherein Santuzza reproaches Turiddu for his unfaithfulness and begs him to return to her; the brief part of Lola is omitted. Both artists are terrifically dramatic, much more so than one would expect, judging from the text, but then that is the way with opera in the Italian style and most fans seem to like it that way. Thus this imported disc should find a reasonable welcome in this country.

Verdi: Rigoletto—*Tutte le feste al tempio* (Act II). One side, and **Donizetti: L'Elisir d'Amore**—*Prendi: per me sei libero* (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (PA-DPX-26). \$2.10.

Rossini: La Gazza Ladra—*Di piacer mi balza il cor* (Act I). One side, and **Rossini: La Gazza Ladra**—*Deh! Tu reggi in tal momento* (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with orchestral accompaniment. 1-12" disc (PA-DPX-13). \$2.10.

Bellini: I Puritani—*Son vergin vezzosa* (Act I). One side, and **Bellini: I Puritani**—*Qui la voce sua soave* ("Mad Scene") (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Lina Pagliughi (soprano) with E. I. A. R. Symphony Orchestra conducted by Tansini. 1-12" disc (PA-DPX-19). \$2.10.

Lina Pagliughi was born in San Francisco of Italian parentage. Many years ago, she went to Italy and became the country's undisputed queen of coloratura sopranos. Certainly, her beautiful voice is trained in the best Italian school. The great Tetrazzini considered her her successor.

Mme. Pagliughi offers some rarely heard music here. *La Gazza Ladra* by Rossini was first presented in Milan on May 31, 1817. Its libretto is by the celebrated da Ponte, and it was chosen to open the first theater in New York built expressly for the giving of opera—the Italian Opera House—on November 18, 1833.

La Gazza Ladra has a fine overture (much beloved by Toscanini) and several arresting arias. Two of these are found here: the florid *Di piacer mi balza il cor*, and the sombre *Deh! Tu reggi in tal momento* with its background like a funeral march.

I Puritani by Bellini has served as a vehicle for some great prima-donnas of the past: Grisi, Patti,

Gerster, Jenny Lind, Sembrich and others. It was last heard when revived by the Metropolitan on February 18, 1918, with Barrientos, Lazaro, De Luca and Mardones. The two excerpts found here are Elvira's so-called mad-scene, *Qui la voce* and the polacca, *Son virgin vezzosa*. Mme. Pagliughi's style for Rossini and Bellini is authentic; it would be difficult to find anyone who sings this music better today.

The third record contains a well-known moment from *Rigoletto*, and Adina's last act aria from *Elisir d'Amore*.

Recording is admirable. Surfaces good. D.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47—Apriele foriero (Act I). One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47**—Dance of the Priestesses (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with E. I. A. R. Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (PA-DPX-21). \$2.10.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47—S'Apré per te il mio cuor (Act II). One side, and **Saint-Saëns: Samson et Dalila, Op. 47**—Oh rispondi ai miei deliri (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano) with E. I. A. R. Symphony Orchestra and Chorus. 1-12" disc (PA-DPX-22). \$2.10.

These two arias from Saint-Saëns' biblical opera, *Samson et Dalila*, are Dalila's opening Song of Spring (*Printemps qui commence*), and the celebrated *Mon coeur s'ouvre a ta voix*. Both are sung by Ebe Stignani in Italian. They are presented with great warmth and tonal sensuousness.

In the opinion of many, Mme. Stignani is the world's greatest mezzo-soprano, the possessor of a fabulous voice comparable to those of the legendary Golden Age. Certainly, the singer's appearance in *Trovatore* and *Gioconda* at the Philadelphia Academy of Music this past winter, substantiated this claim.

The role of Dalila is probably the prize plum of the contralto and mezzo repertoire. Thus it is with a sense of satisfaction that we have this music invested with such lusciousness as Mme. Stignani brings to it. The high B-flat at the close of *Mon coeur s'ouvre*, is taken with the ease of a soprano proving the phenomenal range of this voice.

The orchestral accompaniment of the EIAR symphony is unusually rich in tone. Recording and surfaces are excellent. D.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Se m'ami ancor (recit.); Ai nostri monti (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Cloe Elmo (mezzo-soprano) and Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Umberto Berrettoni. One side, and **Lalo: Le Roi d'Ys**—Aubade: Vainement, ma bien aimée (Act III). (Sung in French). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-12" disc (V-12-0767). \$1.31.

RCA Victor is to be congratulated for adding these fine operatic recordings to its domestic catalog

and thus making them generally available in this country. Both selections are well-known favorites; and it is quite enough, we are sure, to simply mention these recordings of them; opera fans will lose no time in investigating them.

Millöcker: Der Bettelstudent—Ich hab' kein Geld. One side, and **Offenbach: La Belle Hélène**—Paris' Entrance. (Sung in Swedish). Jussi Björling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-10" disc (V-X-6090). \$1.42.

Björling turns his attention to two arias from light operas and sings them with fine spirit. In the aria from *Der Bettelstudent*, he ends on a *d* above high *c*, which he takes with apparent ease. Björling fans will probably wish to add this rather thrilling disc to their collections.

Arias from Famous Operas. M. Mikhailov (basso), Shara-Talian (baritone), Feodor Chaliapin (basso), A. Pirogov (baritone), P. Zhuravlenko (baritone) with orchestral accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 655. \$7.

Borodin: Prince Igor—How goes it, Prince? (Act II). Mikhailov.

Tchaikovsky: Pique-Dame, Op. 68—When you choose me for your husband (Act II). Shara-Talian.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Sadko—Song of the Rich Guest (Scene 3). Chaliapin.

Tchaikovsky: Iolanthe—Who can compare? (Scene 4). Pirogov.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godunov—Monologue: I have attained the highest power (Act II). Pirogov.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godunov—Warlam's Song (Act III, Scene 1). Zhuravlenko.

Vox is releasing a collection of bass and baritone arias from Russian opera this month. These are obviously dubbed from imported originals. The job is often loud and brassy, and you will have to turn your controls well down.

The name of Feodor Chaliapin appears in larger type than those of the other singers, though the great basso is only represented by one selection, the *Song of the Viking Guest* from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko*. Chaliapin made this for HMV also.

Some of the other artists and these actual selections have popped up before in earlier collections. The voices are on the whole excellent; deep Russian voices are apt to be.

A very resonant baritone, Pirogov, does well with King Rene's aria from Tchaikovsky's *Iolanthe*, and the great monolog from *Boris Godounov*, while a new artist, P. Zhuravlenko gives a vital and extremely "alive" performance of *Varlaam's* rollicking *Town of Kazan*.

M. Mikhailov, a bass of ponderous tones, already known to collectors of Russian opera music, is heard in an aria from *Prince Igor*, and the most lyrical mo-

ments of this collection are supplied by the fine baritone of Shara-Talian in a typical Tschaikovsky aria from *Pique Dame*.

The Bolshoi Theater State Orchestra accompanies all these singers with authority and spirit. D.

Opera Duets. Pia Tassinari (soprano) and Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) with orchestra of the Radio Italiana. 3-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 14. \$8.86. *Tosca*—Or lasciami al lavoro (Act I).

La Traviata—Parigi, o cara, noi lasceremo (Act III).

Werther—Garden Scene (Act I).

Ferruccio Tagliavini and Pia Tassinari have presented their recorded version of Mascagni's *L'Amico Fritz*. They follow it with this album of duets from *Tosca*, *Werther* and *Traviata*.

The singers, who in private life are husband and wife, have been unusually successful for a number of years now in their artistic co-operation.

We are told that *Werther* was one of the singers' most celebrated and glowing successes in Italy, before coming to this country, where Massenet's entrancing opera is rarely, if ever, given. While there is a magnificent complete recording of this score with Ninon Vallin and Georges Thill, for those who do not wish to indulge in anything as massive as a complete recording this lovely stretch of music, admirably sung by Mme. Tassinari and Mr. Tagliavini, should fill the bill neatly. The scene is the parting of Charlotte and Werther after their pastoral walk in the moonlight.

Both soprano and tenor have made joint appearances in *Tosca* at the Metropolitan, and here we have a good part of the first act duet in the Church of Sant' Andrea della Valle. Some of Mr. Tagliavini's top tones are rather stiff and hard-driven, but there are other moments where he caresses the vocal line with his well known melodiousness of utterance. Mme. Tassinari sounds good throughout.

The *Traviata* excerpt is no novelty on records. Galli-Curci and Schipa, Bori and McCormack, Caniglia and Gigli, and many other famous artists have seen fit to record the *Parigi, o cara*. To these we can now add the present performance which stands up well.



CHORAL

Bach: St. Matthew Passion (complete). Elsie Sudaby, Kathleen Ferrier, Eric Greene, Henry Cummings, Gordon Clinton, William Parsons, The Bach Choir and The Jacques Orchestra conducted by Dr. Reginald Jacques. 21-12" discs in three albums. Decca Set EDA-101, 102, 103. \$47.25.

In the June 1948 issue we reviewed the nearly complete version of this work by St. Thomas' Choir, Leipzig, conducted by Gunther Ramin on HMV records. The present set provides many interesting comparisons. We will try to summarize the most important ones.

We feel the new Decca set to be the over all choice for several reasons, chiefly that of language. What the St. Matthew Passion could ever hope to mean to most of us sung in anything but English is the important point. We grant that a sincere interpretation carries much conviction regardless of language; but the music was set to words, or thoughts, and we must know them to fully experience the music. The choral diction of the Bach Choir is not perfect, but it is very good and generally understandable, while the soloists are easily understood throughout.

The reproduction of the Decca set is clearly superior to the HMV (made in Germany during the war). The singing of the Bach Choir is preferable to the St. Thomas. Although some may argue about the size of the latter being smaller and preferable, nevertheless, the St. Thomas' group is definitely lacking in the larger and more impressive moments. As for the soloists, Tiana Lemnitz, Friedel Beckmann, Karl Erb, Gerhard Husch, and Siegfried Schulze make a most imposing team for the HMV set. Our final conclusion regarding the soloists was admittedly swayed by the fact that Decca's sing in English, but in any event they do some excellent work, in most cases equal to the others, occasionally better, and once or twice, not as good.

The Decca recording perpetuates a performance given each year by this group, and one which commands great respect in England. The St. Thomas HMV recording is an authentic German interpretation by a group of fine tradition. Either one is superior to the older Koussevitzky set (DM-411/3, deleted). S.

Genesis Suite. Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen and chorus conducted by Hugo Strelitzer. Edward Arnold (narrator). 5-12" discs in album. Artist Set JS-10. \$7.56.

This unique work was conceived by Nathaniel Shilkret, a conductor and composer who is well-known to most record collectors because of the great number of recordings he conducted when he was a musical director for Victor. His idea was to set important passages from the book of *Genesis* to music—the text to be spoken by a narrator with appropriate musical backgrounds. Mr. Shilkret supplied the musical setting for the first episode "Creation." He then invited other leading composers to supply settings for the succeeding passages. The musical background for the second episode "Adam and Eve" was supplied by Alexandre Tansman; the third "Cain and Abel" by Darius Milhaud; the fourth "Noah's Ark" by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco; the fifth "The Covenant" by Ernst Toch; and the sixth "Babel" by Igor Stravinsky. A Postlude composed by Arnold Schönberg completes this massive opus.

All of these composers have evidently taken their tasks very seriously and have produced much worthwhile music, but to take this work at one sitting would require more patience than this reviewer has at his disposal. Much of the music has a sameness that gradually becomes quite tiresome. Stravinsky's

"Babel" and Schönberg's *Postlude* are exceptions; they are little compositions that are particularly attractive in themselves and we are sure that we are going to select them from the group and play them quite often. This may be easily done because each episode begins and ends on a record side—some parts require two sides and others but one.

Edward Arnold, who reads the Bible passages is a very able narrator, and much of the charm of these recordings is due to his beautiful speaking voice and excellent diction.

This is indeed a novel recording; and it has been well accomplished in good taste and with appropriate dignity. We doubt whether it will enjoy a large sale but we rather believe that there will be enough persons interested to make it a reasonable commercial success.

R.

Stravinsky: Symphony of Psalms. (Sung in Latin).

Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra with Mixed Chorus conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-814. \$4.15.

The September 1948 issue contained a review of this work as performed by Ernest Ansermet with the London Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra on English Decca records (EDA-52). The review also discussed the work quite thoroughly, so we will not cover that ground again. As for the two recordings now available, they are entirely different and present a tough choice. The authority of a composer conducting his own work carries much weight, particularly in the case of Stravinsky, whose music is not easy to perform and whose recordings of recent years have been uniformly fine. The present set replaces one he made for Columbia many years ago, and shows him to be a more certain and secure, if slightly more uncompromising conductor now that he was previously.

So we have here a performance that we might call severe. It is profound, as the music and text require, but it has sharp edges and square corners so to speak. The Ansermet rendition achieves the sonority and profundity with a little smoother finish. These very qualities are magnified in their respective sets by the type of reproduction Decca's is—well, *ffrr*, which by now is nearly the criterion; Columbia's is not up to their usual standard, it is too sharp and edgey, although it is clearer and more transparent than Decca. The net result is a more pleasant quality on Decca. This, together with a more resilient performance sways us to the Decca set.

If you don't feel it's worth the difference in price, be assured the Stravinsky version on Columbia has ample merits, including virtually noiseless surfaces.

S.



VOCAL

Mahler Songs. Desi Halban (soprano) accompanied by Bruno Walter (piano). 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-809. \$3.57.

These rarely-heard songs of Gustav Mahler, a com-

poser who derives his greatest fame from his vast symphonies, gather added interest from the fact that Desi Halban and Bruno Walter are the artists.

Desi Halban is the daughter of the late Selma Kurz, Vienna's great coloratura of the phenomenal trill, who was a discovery of Mahler's. Bruno Walter was the intimate friend and disciple of the composer, and at present his greatest interpreter. It is therefore self-evident that we are very much at the source here.

Mahler's songs are both sad and gay, but even the gay ones are tinged with a faint lilac nostalgia. Simplicity was his and uncompromising sincerity. The fact that Mahler was author of both words and music gives these pieces a unity they could not quite achieve otherwise.

Erinnerung and *Nicht Wiedersehen* are filled with the melancholy of unrequited love, which Mahler understood only too well. *Scheiden und Meiden* might have been written by Schubert in its uncomplicated and lilting simplicity.

Delightful are both *Abloesung im Sommer* and *Hans und Gretel*, where Mahler's love of children comes to the fore. One of the most charming items of this little collection is *Ich ging mit Lust durch einen grünen Wald*—this is Mahler at his most typical and engaging.

The performance is stamped with affection and authority—a happy combination. Both Miss Halban and Mr. Walter are evidently engaged in a labor of devotion and love. The recording is a little over-bright, but the soprano's pretty pianissimo tones are well reproduced.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Popular Favorites. (Sung in German). Erna Sack (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-30. \$3.92.

Erna Sack, the phenomenal German coloratura, whose fame in America is largely due to the popularity of her recordings, has turned her attention to a number of selections in a lighter vein. She sings these with proper spirit and demonstrates her unique technique which has established her as perhaps the greatest coloratura of our times.

The selections are: *Laughing Waltz* (from the film "Nanon"); *Sleep My Baby Sleep*; *Ay, Ay, Ay*; *Vieni, Vieni*; *When a Lovely Lady Falls in Love*; and *Ciribiribin*.

Welsh Folk Songs. (Sung in Welsh). David Lloyd (tenor) accompanied by Meirion Williams (piano). 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-70. \$5.25.

The singer of these Welsh songs is not to be confused with the young American tenor of the same name who has risen to considerable fame on the operatic and concert stage since he left Curtis Institute to take his place in the professional field. By the way the American's correct name is David Lloyd Jenkins but when he signed with Columbia Concerts, that booking organization insisted that he shorten his professional name by dropping the Jenkins—guess Columbia Concerts did not know of the very able Welsh tenor who

has achieved considerable success in the British Isles and on the Continent both in concerts and opera. Among other important engagements, the Welshman has sung leading roles with the famous Glyndebourne Opera Company. As a boy he won many prizes in Eisteddfods all over his native Wales, and today is considered one of the best interpreters of Welsh folk songs. We believe that the present album will fully demonstrate his ability in that field.

Selections that Mr. Lloyd has chosen for the present collection are: *Yr Hen Gerddor*; *Arafa Don*; *Elen Fwyn*; and *Sol Y Blodan*.

Bless This House. Christopher Lynch (tenor) accompanied by Warner Bass (organ). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-813. \$4.15.

Christopher Lynch, the gifted Irish tenor whom John McCormack himself designated as "the one most likely to succeed me." carries on the tradition by presenting a group of seven songs, each in its way a benediction; most of these are also former McCormack favorites.

Both the deeply reverent *The Palms* by Faure and *Panis Angelicus* by Cesar Franck were standards in the McCormack repertoire as they have proved also on the Lynch programs. The title song *Bless This House*, invokes a blessing on home and friends, and *My Treasure* is a parent's blessing on his child.

Deeply touching is *The Children's Prayer* by Thayer, which tells of the tragic plight of war-torn children. *Gift of God*, which Mr. Lynch sings in Gaelic, is a lullaby of exquisite tenderness. Finally he sings the well-loved Schubert *Ave Maria*, and invests the familiar prayer to the Virgin with his own grace and particular musical charm.

Cottrau: Santa Lucia. (Sung in Italian). Luigi Infantino (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. One side, and **DeCurtis: Torna a Surriento.** (Sung in Neapolitan). Luigi Infantino (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Franco Patane. 1-10" disc (C-17570D). 89c. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-121). 95c.

Luigi Infantino has gained great popularity with record collectors here in America through his imported records and because of his successful engagement with the New York City Center Opera. Columbia has noted this popularity and thus the present domestic disc appears on a recent release sheet—the recording was accomplished abroad. It contains two well-known and beloved Italian songs that seem to have a universal appeal. Infantino sings them with the proper sympathy and the reproduction is highly satisfactory.

Franck: Panis Angelicus. (Sung in Latin). One side, and **Godard: Jocelyn**—*Berceuse: Cachés dans set asile.* (Sung in French and English). James Melton (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 1-12" disc (V-12-0764). \$1.31.

James Melton now joins the ranks of the tenors who down through the years have made recordings

of these well-beloved selections. John McCormack started the procession and to our mind has never been equalled. Mr. Melton sings them acceptably and his many fans will doubtless welcome this disc.

VIOLIN



Violin Favorites. David Oistrakh (violin) accompanied by Abram Makarov (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-27. \$3.92.

The almost legendary Russian violinist, David Oistrakh, is known only in America through his recordings. A concert tour of U. S. A. was planned for him shortly after he won the Ysaye Competition at Brussels but the outbreak of the war in Europe put an end to that project.

Oistrakh was born at Odessa in 1908. He began his violin studies at the age of five and three years later made his first concert appearance. In 1922 he entered the Odessa Conservatory, receiving his diploma there in 1926. From then on he gave many concerts throughout Europe and established himself as an artist of rare distinction. Many major violin works by contemporary Russian composers have been written for and dedicated to him, including the colorful Violin Concerto by Aram Khachaturian. His recording of this work with the Russian State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Gauk (Mercury Set DM-10) was given a review in our August 1948 issue.

Since 1932, Oistrakh has been on the faculty of the Moscow State Conservatory of Music, where he is presently head of the Violin Department.

There is no question but that Oistrakh is an outstanding artist in his field and when occasion permits he will probably make a world tour, which should certainly be a great success and add immensely to his fame, which now, as far as America is concerned, rests solely on his recordings.

The recordings contained in the present album were made in Czechoslovakia and are excellent as far as bringing out Oistrakh's talents are concerned but there might have been a better balance between the solo instrument and the piano. However, as we imagine that most persons who purchase this album will do so for the purpose of studying and appraising Oistrakh's playing, this slight lack of balance will not be too important.

Oistrakh has chosen the following selections for this interesting album: Sarasate arrangement of Chopin's *Nocturne in E flat, Op. 9, No. 2*; Prokofieff's *Melodie, Op. 35a, No. 3*; Mogilevsky's arrangement of Scriabin's *Nocturne in F sharp minor, Op. 5, No. 1*; and Tartini's *Variations on a Theme of Arcangelo Corelli* arranged by Kreisler. R.

Ravel: Tzigane. Zino Francescatti (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72771D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-114). 95c.

Francescatti is unquestionably a great fiddler and

he certainly does some brilliant playing in this exciting recording. One would almost think that he had Gypsy blood in his veins, the way he handles this Gypsy rhapsody of Ravel's. If you like lively violin music played with artistic skill, here it is.

Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise*, Op. 34, No. 14. One side, and *Ravel*—trans. Roques: *Sonatine*—*Menuet*, and *Tansman*: *Mouvement Perpetuel* (from "Cinq Pièces"). Jascha Heifetz (violin) accompanied by Emanuel Bay (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0765). \$1.31.

An example of where the human voice and the violin meet on common ground is revealed in a new RCA Victor recording of Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise*, Op. 34, No. 14. Originally composed as a song without words, the *Vocalise* offers the singer a typically lush Rachmaninoff melody to be sung with all the vocal richness he or she can muster. Transcribed for the violin, the same requirement applies. Heifetz plays the piece with a "singing" tone that breathes in its life-like luster, yet with a refinement the human voice could hardly equal. Two engaging encore pieces take up the reverse side of this disc. One is the *Menuet*, transcribed from Ravel's *Sonatine* for Piano. Its impressionistic beauties are highlighted by the fine accompaniment provided by Emanuel Bay. The other, *Mouvement Perpetuel* by Tansman, is an exciting show-piece that Heifetz tosses off with characteristic elan. With his violin muted, playing spiccato, the effect is like an angry bee buzzing around a banjo player. It is the type of encore critics generally rate as sure-fire.

ORGAN



Buxtehude: *Fugue in F major*. One side, and **Pachelbel:** *Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her* and **Pachelbel:** *Alein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr*. Karl Matthaei (organ). 1-12" disc (V-FM-23). \$2.

Three interesting pieces, illustrating organ music of the late 17th century in Germany, composed by two masters of that period—splendidly played by an able organist and nicely recorded. The label states that Mr. Matthaei is "Organist in Winterthur."

PIANO



Beethoven: *Fantasia in G minor*, Op. 77. Two sides, and **Beethoven:** *Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp major*, Op. 78. Three sides, and **Mendelssohn:** *Song Without Words in G major*, Op. 62, No. 1 ("May Breezes"). Rudolf Serkin (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-816. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Beethoven:** *Trio No. 4 in D major*, Op. 70, No. 1. Busch-Serkin Trio. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4128). \$4.85.

Neither of the Beethoven selections is generally available and so these superb recordings by Serkin are particularly welcome. The *Fantasia* is a lovely

piece that anyone may enjoy—it seems strange to us that it is not heard more often. The *Sonata* is said to have been one of the composer's favorites and many music lovers feel that it is one of the most charming of the thirty-two which Beethoven wrote. Collectors of Beethoven recordings will find this album of unusual interest.

The *Fantasia* is available separately on a single disc (C-72793-D).

DICTION



Aleichem: *Tales from the Old Country*. Howard da Silva (narrator) with orchestra conducted by Serge Hovey. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set DU-5. \$5.10.

Here is an album whose appeal will be limited to those persons who are interested in the tales of the famous Yiddish writer, Solomon Rabinowitch, whose pen name was Sholem Aleichem. Aleichem died in Brooklyn in 1916. In 1946 a number of his short stories were translated into English and published under the title "The Old Country." The book enjoyed a tremendous sale for a volume of its kind; it is currently in its sixth printing.

Sholem Aleichem has been called "the Jewish Mark Twain" and "the Jewish Charles Dickens." However, we do not feel that either of these comparisons are quite accurate. True he had some of the characteristics of both of these beloved writers, but the charm of his stories lies in the peculiar Yiddish idiom that was his and which his translators, Julius and Frances Butwin, have caught so well in their English versions.

Howard da Silva, the well-known actor, has been a student and admirer of Aleichem since his childhood, and his admirable adaptations of some of the stories from "The Old Country," and his narration of them on these discs, appear to us as labors of love as well as bits of excellent drama. Mr. Silva is to the manner born, and those interested, will, we feel sure, acclaim his renditions for their authenticity—he has caught the all-important idiom to perfection.

The three tales that Mr. Silva has chosen for this unique album are: *The Fiddle*; *Dreyfus in Kasrilevka*; and *A Yom Kippur Scandal*.

The Bible Speaks. Raymond Edward Johnson (chronicler), *Words of Our Lord* by House Jameson, and Edward Vito (harp). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DG-32. \$4.

The RCA Victor album, "The Bible Speaks," is an adaptation of the well-known religious program, sponsored by the Joint Religious Radio Committee of the Congregation of Christian Churches, which has been heard in transcription form on more than 400 radio stations in this country and also has been broadcast in Canada, the Philippines, Hawaii, China and South America. The album is being released by RCA Victor in cooperation with the Committee, which is a cooperative, interdenominational organization repre-

senting the Congregational Christian Church, the Evangelical and Reformed Church, the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. and the United Church of Canada.

The passages from the New Testament having to do largely with the ministry of Jesus are grouped under three headings: "The Parables", "The Sayings of Jesus" and "Golgotha". The cast of players who bring these passages to life are thoroughly capable and they play their parts with reverence and proper dignity. Much of the dialogue is treated with rare simplicity but the content is such that it cannot help being sincerely dramatic. We can see where these recordings will be of immense value to teachers in the various Sunday Schools for they will bring to the children many important steps in the life of Our Saviour in a meaningful and easily understood manner.

Poems by C. Day Lewis. C. Day Lewis (speaking). 3-12" discs in album (V-C-3764 to V-C-3766). \$5.99.

This album will appeal to but a limited number of our readers and so we will do little more than list it. These recordings of poems by the celebrated English poet, Cecil Day Lewis (1904-), and read by the author, were sponsored by the British Council. Mr. Lewis's diction is such that each word comes out crystal clear. Those interested will find these records highly satisfactory.

The Last Supper. One side, and **The Sermon on the Mount.** J. Carroll Naish (speaking) with organ accompaniment. 1-12" disc. (Simmel-Meservey 2392). \$3.

There seems to be springing up all over our country a renewed interest in the Bible. A great campaign is under way to direct the attention of everyone to the importance of reading that book of books. Probably to support this movement the present disc was issued. It contains two of the most important and most beloved discourses of our Lord. They are beautifully spoken by the distinguished actor J. Carroll Naish with appropriate and unobtrusive organ accompaniments of original music composed by Eddison von Ottenfeld. The selections have been splendidly recorded on non-breakable Vinylite.

HARPSICHORD



Daquin: La Guitare and Dandrieu: Les Cascades. One side, and **Couperin: Chaconne and Chambonnieres: Volte.** Eta Harich-Schneider (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (V-DA-4449). \$1.95.

Interesting examples of late 17th and early 18th century French music for the harpsichord artistically performed by an able player and nicely recorded in Europe.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DI—Dise, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargai, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

Ground
Floor

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 3

MAY, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

JUST as we were about to go to press, the startling announcement came that the Magnavox Company has made sweeping reductions in the prices of its radio-phonographs — some reductions amount to as much as 40 per cent. This is the first time that such a thing has occurred as far as Magnavox is concerned and it is something that is not likely to occur again. These reduced prices apply only to the instruments that are presently available because they could not be manufactured to sell for anything like the prices now quoted.

Television is unquestionably the reason for this drastic action. The sudden rise in popularity of this new form of home entertainment has caused the sale of radio-phonographs to fall off sharply — many dealers who were not particularly interested in the record business have devoted all their efforts to the promotion of television and have neglected radio-phonographs entirely. Magnavox did not believe that this switch could come so quickly and did not cut its production fast enough; thus Magnavox finds itself with an overstock of radio-phonographs. True, there are not many of any one model, but the aggregate is great enough to be a problem and Magnavox has decided to solve this problem by making drastic reductions.

The reason that we are mentioning this in THE NEW RECORDS is that all of our readers are interested in fine record reproduction, and it is pretty generally conceded that Magnavox has been the leader in that field for many years; therefore, it is likely that a goodly number of our readers will be interested in securing a new instrument, if they can purchase it at a price considerably less than has ever been offered before. If you are interested, we suggest that you get in touch with your local Magnavox

dealer without delay. Practically all of the instruments that have been reduced are equipped to play the new LP records.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

LP RELEASES FOR APRIL, 1949

Artist Records has recently announced its entry into the LP Microgroove field. Tests have shown that these discs will play well on any standard LP equipment, and we wish to call the attention of our readers to the item listed below:

Four American Landscapes. Janssen Symphony — Janssen. 1-12" disc (Artist-100). \$5. (TNR May '49).

Cetra-Soria has recently announced its entry into the LP Microgroove field, and we are pleased to call the attention of our readers to the following first release:

Verdi: *La Forza del Destino* (nearly complete). Soloist and E. I. A. R. Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Marinuzzi. 2-12" discs (CE-50.001/2) (automatic sequence). \$11.90. (TNR Dec. '46).

New Columbia LP Microgroove releases are as follows:

Beethoven: *Sonata No. 1 in D major for Violin and Piano*, Op. 12, No. 1. Szigeti and Horszowski. One side, and Schubert: *Sonatina No. 1 in D major*, Op. 137, No. 1. Szigeti and Foldes. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4133). \$4.85. (TNR May '49 and Nov. '43).

Chopin: *Concerto No. 2 in F minor*, Op. 21. Malcuzynski (piano) and Philharmonia Orchestra — Kletski. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4135). (TNR Nov. '48).

After Dark. Morton Gould. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4134). \$4.85. (TNR April '45).

Tchaikovsky: Sleeping Beauty—Ballet Music, Op. 66. Royal Opera House Orch.—Lambert. One side, and Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. City of Birmingham Orchestra—Weldon. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4136). \$4.85. (TNR Nov. '48 and Dec. '48).

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 9, Op. 70. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York—Kurtz. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4137). \$4.85. (TNR July '47).

R. Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra—Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4138). \$4.85. (TNR June '48).

Weill: Street Scene. Original Cast and orchestra—Abravanel. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4139). \$4.85. (TNR June '47).

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot. Paul Robeson with accompaniment. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2038). \$3.85. (TNR May '49).

Songs of Debussy and Ravel. One side, and French Operatic Arias. Martial Singher (baritone) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4152). \$4.85. (TNR May '49 and Oct. '45).

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite. Op. 71a. Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. One side, and Music of Tchaikovsky. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra—Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4151). \$4.85. (TNR Jan. '48 and May '46).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhem Furtwängler. 7-12" discs in album (V-DBS-9296 to V-DB-9302) (automatic sequence). \$17.07.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 6-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EFL-2502. \$9.19.

Those who acquired Furtwängler's magnificent reading of the Brahms First Symphony may well be tempted with his Eroica, for it is similar in conception—bold outlines framing meticulous detail. There are many passages which are truly thrilling; all of it as carefully and precisely executed as any orchestra could be expected to play. Furtwängler's care for detail is evident throughout, the string parts being particularly well polished. The Vienna orchestra plays with glorious tonal splendor and resiliency, and the hall acoustics, which border on echo, lend ample atmosphere. Here is yet another typical Furtwängler reading (with the Vienna orchestra as a bonus) for the many who admire his great art.

There is one exception to the above paragraph which we wish to make, to keep the record straight. Those who are knowing students of Beethoven's music will take issue with many points of Furtwängler's reading, for his interpretation does not follow tradition every moment. We would not deny that Weingartner would still be preferred by the astute scholar; some may even suffer the wretched reproduction of the Toscanini set for its liberal interpretation. But all the rest of us may safely enjoy the many glories of the new Furtwängler version, including its splendid reproduction, a couple of extraneous noises which slipped in notwithstanding.

Now for Mr. Mengelberg. He surprised us by not being as ponderous as we expected. We were also very much surprised and disappointed with the thin and wiry tone of this recording. The orchestra never was the greatest, although the super-resonant reproduction it enjoyed in days gone by gave added bloom to its tone. But this recording seems to lack the thrill of the old, old Columbias, although it is, of course, clearer and brighter. We would still advise one of the other recent domestic recordings over Mengelberg; or if you care to indulge in imported delicacies, Furtwängler, by all odds. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade. Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 6-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-106. \$13.65.

Moussorgsky—orch. Ravel: Pictures at an Exhibition. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-90. \$11.55.

Debussy—orch. Busser: Petite Suite. Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-98. \$5.25.

These three can easily be grouped together, for one adjective describes them all—remarkable. Ansermet has caught the spirit of each with rare insight. His Scheherazade is a masterpiece of good taste and an exciting riot of color, a difficult combination for any conductor in this war-horse. He has mighty stiff competition from Ormandy's recent Philadelphia set (Col. MM-772) which is on five records and now sells for half the price of the Ansermet version. Furthermore, Columbia achieved fidelity in reproduction which rivals English Decca. We can only say Ansermet gets as fine reproduction as Decca ever produced, particularly regarding power, which this set has in good measure—but it is sweet power, with no crackle or distortion at the peaks. It is quite an experience. Ormandy's orchestra is a shade finer in detail, as would be expected.

Using the London Philharmonic in Kingsway Hall, Ansermet performs Ravel's wonderful orchestration of the Moussorgsky Pictures with telling effect. Again the reproduction is superb with every shade of color fully realized. The closing chords of

"The Great Gate at Kiev" are massive — a thrilling climax! Of the many versions now available, no one will make a mistake settling for Ansermet, second and third choices being Rodzinski (Col. MM-641) and Stokowski (Vic. DM-706).

Music of another type is found in the *Petite Suite*. Debussy's four hand piano suite found a knowing arranger in composer-conductor Henri Busser. The four movements, *En Bateau*, *Ballet*, *Cortege*, and *Menuet*, have brevity and a light touch that is quite fascinating. Again, dear old Ansermet is just right, playing it with exquisite taste. The great Swiss conductor has added still more to his laurels with these three top-notch albums. S.

Four American Landscapes. Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles conducted by Werner Janssen. 4-12" discs in album. Artist Set JS-13. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (Artist-100) \$5.

Gilbert: *Dance in the Place Congo*. 4 sides.

Copland: *Quiet City*. 2 sides.

Ives: *The Housatonic at Stockbridge*.

Cowell: *Ancient Desert Drone*.

Here is a worthy album for the serious music devotee, and one that will provide much food for thought. The surprising thing about it is that the music is all at least ten years old; Gilbert's selection is over thirty years old. To have some of this real American music recorded is indeed a fine thing; and to have it so beautifully reproduced, by a small independent company, is remarkable. The performances are more than competent, they are really excellent, with very fine reproduction an added feature. Janssen is obviously immersed in his music and directs it with skill and sincerity.

Gilbert's *Dance* is program music inspired by an article by George W. Cable in an 1886 *Century Magazine*, entitled "Dance in the Place Congo," which describes the wild and quasi-barbaric revels of the slaves on late Sunday afternoons in the outskirts of New Orleans. His symphonic poem is descriptive and colorful, and with the elaborate outline of notes one may easily get a vivid picture from this music.

Ives' *Housatonic* is the finale of a suite, "Three Places in New England," and reflects the moving river and surrounding landscapes. This old master of modern American music experimented with modern musical devices, which we now associate with Stravinsky and Schönberg, long before those gentlemen used them.

Copland's *Quiet City*, for trumpet, English horn, and string orchestra, uses material from the score which he composed for the Irwin Shaw play of the same title, dealing with nocturnal thoughts and social problems of city dwellers.

Cowell's *Desert Drone* was taken by Stokowski on tour with his All-American Youth Orchestra. It is not programmatic. It is based on a drone note of D, and in the style of desert music.

"Four American Landscapes" is, of course, an

arbitrary title for this album. It is more than a clever idea, however, for it enriches the recorded repertoire with important and pleasurable American music. S.

Dvorák: *The Golden Spinning Wheel*, Op. 109 (Symphonic Poem). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Set DM-1291. \$4.75.

Smetana: *The Bartered Bride* (Excerpts). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1294. \$2.62.

Overture.

Polka (Act I).

Dance of the Comedians (Act III).

Liszt: *Orpheus* (Symphonic Poem No. 4). Three sides, and Chabrier: *Marche Joyeuse*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1295. \$2.62.

Debussy: *Printemps*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1293. \$2.62. (Two-pocket plain albums are available for envelope sets at 65¢ each.)

Sir Thomas Beecham's 70th birthday anniversary will occur in a few days from the time this is written — his natal day is April 29th. To commemorate the occasion RCA Victor is releasing the four sets of discs listed above. All of these recordings were made in England with the very fine Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and in every case the reproduction is well up to the standard set by the HMV technicians, and this is high praise indeed.

As we have noted before, Sir Thomas takes a great interest in recorded music and is familiar with what is available on records and what needs to be recorded. Seldom do you find him making another recording of a work that is already available in an adequate version. Furthermore, he realizes that he will be judged throughout the musical world by his recordings and so he selects only works that he feels he can do well, and after they have been recorded he will not permit them to be released until he has carefully listened to the sample pressings and is thoroughly satisfied with the performances. It is indeed a rare occasion when the critics do not praise highly a Beecham recording.

While all of the above selections, except Dvorák's *The Golden Spinning Wheel*, have been recorded before, modern versions of them are certainly acceptable and we believe they will be welcomed by the majority of record collectors.

The Golden Spinning Wheel is the third of Dvorák's symphonic poems. It dates from 1896 and is based on a colorful folk ballad by Karel Jaromír Erben. It is full of romantic melodies and is the sort of music that one may enjoy at first hearing. Its

elaborate orchestration calls for a large orchestra and gives the conductor an opportunity to spread himself — Beecham makes the most of this opportunity in this recording In the excerpts from *The Bartered Bride* Sir Thomas keeps us on our toes throughout his performance of these gay selections Liszt's symphonic poem, *Orpheus*, is the antithesis of his *Les Preludes*, which was recently recorded by Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra (Vic. DM-1277). Instead of being brilliant and bombastic as much of Liszt's music is, it is predominantly quiet and thoughtful with much of lyric beauty. It contains beautiful solo parts for violin and harp Debussy's *Printemps* is one of this composer's early works (1887) and was originally written for orchestra and wordless female chorus. The present version for orchestra was made available by Debussy in 1913. It is the essence of delicate refinement and fastidious craftsmanship and just the sort of music that Sir Thomas produces so exquisitely.

We don't know when we have had four items all released at one time that are so worthy of the attention of discerning music lovers as these four. R.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Cleveland Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia MM-733. \$4.15.

At last we have on records something comparable to Koussevitzky's reading of the "Italian" Symphony. His early set (Vic. DM-294) has long been the criterion, and many found his later one (Vic. DM-1259), which was reviewed in December, 1948, still the best. Our opinion in December was that the remake was not as inspired a performance as the original set. But all of that may now be safely put aside, for the present set by Szell is easily the equal of either Koussevitzky version. In addition to which it is far better reproduction than either. Comparing Szell with the Bostonian's later album (DM-1259) we find greater clarity and definition. In fact, we would find it difficult to distinguish Szell's album from an English Decca recording in many respects. The better your machine, the more noticeable is the superiority of the Szell album over Koussevitzky's. The Boston orchestra has slightly more deft woodwind players, but that is no deciding factor. As for the other recordings of the "Italian," some have merits; however, none of them is close to Szell's in conception, performance, or reproduction.

We imagine nearly every reader of this bulletin is familiar with the bright and sparkling "Italian" Symphony. For those who have yet to make its acquaintance, we suggest you deny yourself the pleasure no longer, for it belongs in every collection, no matter how small; if for only one reason — it will give you a lift every time you play it.

The April, 1949, issue of THE NEW RECORDS listed the LP number (ML-4127) of this new recording; however, the review copy was late arriving,

therefore the date of original review should be May, 1949, instead of April.

Hindemith: Mathis der Maler. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul Hindemith. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-2503. \$5.25.

Of Capitol's five initial album releases, this one appears to be the best from the standpoint of reproduction. Telefunken always has good luck with Berlin Philharmonic recordings; the Glück overture with Furtwängler and this orchestra, released as a single this month, is another example of their better recording. We understand that Capitol has re-recorded all the Telefunkens on tape and then back to discs in an effort to equalize the quality and characteristics of the various Telefunken records and also to make them more adaptable to the average reproducer found in homes. Whether or not this is true, it is a fact that the present Telefunkens are not as good as today's best by English Decca, His Master's Voice, and Columbia, although in their day, a decade ago, they were then easily the best obtainable.

Mathis der Maler is a marvelous score that has always given us great pleasure. It does not receive enough concert performances today, for it has genuine worth exceeding much of the fare we hear every day. In three movements, it is a musical representation of three panels painted by the Sixteenth Century German artist, Mathias Grunewald, for the Isenheim Altar in the Museum at Colmar. The Reformation was a trying time for the Germans, and Hindemith has attempted to project the thoughts, fears, hopes, and aspirations of this warrior-painter during that period.

Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra made a communicative recording of the work (Vic. DM-854) which eclipses the composer's own reading in the final movement, "Temptation of St. Anthony." The other movements are a bit clearer in Hindemith's set, but the overall effect probably remains in favor of Ormandy, believe it or not. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74 (Pathétique). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DV-27. \$7.25. Also available on 45 rpm discs, 5-7" vinylite discs in box. Set WDM-1281. \$5.51.

Here is a very fine reading of Tchaikovsky's Sixth. The orchestra is good and Mr. Toscanini is his usual self, which is to say excellent. This symphony is a particular favorite of ours; not that we are especially in the mood for it at all times, but we cannot imagine a symphonic library without it.

If, by some chance, there is a library lacking the famous *Pathétique*, we would certainly recommend the present recording in preference to any of the domestic versions. We do not wish to exchange it, however, for our precious Furtwängler reading which we were far-sighted enough to obtain before Victor deleted it from its catalog. (It is still available on

English HMV, though: DB-8000/5, automatic coupling). The only other domestic version to consider, in our opinion, is Rodzinski (Col. MM-558).

Our review copy was in the form of the new 45 rpm discs, so we cannot report on the 78 rpm surfaces; however, we can imagine they are up to Victor's standard. These new "45's" are certainly cute! The reproduction on our set was excellent; all in all, Victor is to be commended for giving us a good domestic version of this work.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus, Op. 56 — Overture. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12946D). \$1.05.

Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron — Overture. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12947D). \$1.05.

Strauss Overtures. (Contains both above overtures). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-311. \$3.10. Also available on LP Micro-groove, coupled with **Strauss Waltzes** by the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Ormandy. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2041). \$3.85.

At first we wondered why Columbia would wish to issue these two popular Strauss overtures twice, as listed in the heading; we are now enlightened, having played them. Obviously the two single discs are in manual sequence — one must turn each one to hear the completion of the work. The album is in automatic sequence, so that if one wishes both overtures and has a changer, he may listen to the complete work without arising from his chair.

Mr. Ormandy does these two numbers to a turn; we have heard him do them often in the concert hall, and wondered why he never recorded them.

The shellac pressing of Strauss Waltzes on the reverse of the LP release will not be issued until June, when it will be reviewed in these columns.

Richard Rodgers Suite. Louis Levy and his Concert Orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-72. \$4.20.

In March we reviewed this orchestra's version of the George Gershwin Suite. Apparently this venture was successful, for here we have another album in a similar vein. It must be London's "full range recording" that sells these sets, for as we said, "any number of bands in this country could do a more interesting job."

The tunes in this suite are *The Lady is a Tramp*; *Johnny One Note*; *He Dances on My Ceiling*; *With a Song in My Heart* and others in a similar vein.

Invitation to the Waltz. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-815. \$5.20.

Kostelanetz puts plenty of romance in these familiar waltzes and turns the clock back over a quarter of a century for this reviewer, when he went

to dances in tails with top hat and white kid gloves. The present generation of young folks will probably like these tunes, but they will not bring to mind the memories they recall to us oldsters.

The selections that Mr. Kostelanetz has chosen for this album are Waltz from "Sari" (Kalman); *A Thousand and One Nights* (Johann Strauss); *Vienna, City of My Dreams* (Sieczynski); *Gypsy Love Waltz* (Lehar); *Gold and Silver Waltz* (Lehar); Waltz from "Gypsy Baron" (Johann Strauss); *Two Hearts in Three-Quarter Time* (Stolz); and *Waltz Dream* (Oscar Strauss).

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D major, Op. 25 ("Classical"). L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-107. \$5.25.

Recordings of this charming work are available by the Minneapolis, the St. Louis, the Boston, and the Philadelphia orchestras. Perhaps Decca feels that *ffrr* reproduction and the growing popularity of Charles Münch will warrant importing and offering the present recording for sale in this country. We rather doubt it, but those persons who are planning to add this item to their libraries would be very foolish not to consider Mr. Münch's version. It is certainly excellent, but whether it is worth the price, which is of course higher than the domestic albums, is very much of a question.

Goldmark: The Queen of Sheba — Ballet Music. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0796). \$1.31.

Many years ago Frederick Stock made a recording of this music with the Chicago Symphony but that disc disappeared a long time ago and we don't remember hearing these lovely Goldmark melodies since. It is just the sort of selection that the Boston "Pops" does extremely well; and as the music will doubtless be new to many record collectors, the present record should enjoy considerable popularity.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier Suite, Op. 59. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Rankl. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-99. \$5.25.

Other recordings of this tuneful music are available, but we doubt whether any of them equal this fine *ffrr* version which was made in The Kingsway Hall (London).

Gluck: Alceste — Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (CL-81001). \$1.32.

Berlioz: Le Carnaval Romain Overture, Op. 9. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 1-12" disc (CL-81002). \$1.32.

The two recordings listed above were made by the famous Telefunken Company in Germany and have

been re-pressed by Capitol from imported matrices. They will be of especial interest to collectors of Furtwängler and Mengelberg. The reproduction is satisfactory and the surfaces smooth and quiet.

Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani—Overture. La Scala Orchestra of Milan conducted by Gino Marinuzzi. 1-12" disc (CL-82000). \$1.58.

Of the several recordings of this Verdi overture that are presently available, this Telefunken one appearing in America under the Capitol label is probably the best—certainly it rates with the best.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in D major for Violin and Piano, Op. 12, No. 1. Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Mieczyslaw Horzowski (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-312. \$3.10.

Critics through the ages have not been too kind to this first sonata for violin and piano from the pen of Beethoven. It unquestionably is not in a class with No. 5 in F Major, Op. 24 ("Spring"), a superb recording of which by Heifetz and Bay was released by RCA Victor a couple of months ago (Vic. DM-1283); or No. 9 in A major, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer") of which there are several good recorded versions. However, we surely enjoyed Szigeti and Horzowski's present performance and if after hearing it, you are not impressed with the work, there is little reason to believe that you ever will be, because we doubt whether you will ever hear it more splendidly played. Fine reproduction and excellent balance are added features of this set.

Stravinsky: Dumbarton Oaks Concerto. Dumbarton Oaks Festival Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 2-12" discs in album. Mercury Set DM-1. \$3.92.

(This annotation is reprinted from the October 1947 issue. It appeared in this place when this recording first appeared under the Keynote label.)

This concerto for chamber orchestra was completed in France in the spring of 1938. Its first performance was given on the thirtieth wedding anniversary of the Hon. and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss at their estate "Dumbarton Oaks." Nadia Boulanger conducted this performance. The present recording was made in conjunction with another performance at Dumbarton Oaks in the spring of 1947 at which time the composer was the conductor.

Considerable interest has centered around this work, and persons interested in modern music, and Stravinsky in particular, have expressed a desire for a recording of it.

Ingolf Dahl, who wrote the notes that accompany this album, describes this work very neatly when he says:

"The Dumbarton Oaks Concerto followed chronologically the composer's sparkling and light-hearted ballet 'Card Game' and preceded his monumental

'Symphony in C.' Both of these works are to some extent reflected in this Concerto. The ballet, in particular, was the parent of the delicate 'air de danse' of the Concerto's second movement. The symphony, on the other hand, is anticipated thematically as well as structurally in the concerto's more richly textured outer movements."

This is not a recording for the general music loving public—it is particularly for those persons who know, and are interested in, Stravinsky and his musical development.

Fauré: Quartet No. 2 in G minor, Op. 45. London Belgian Piano Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-74. \$9.45.

Fauré's chamber music has never taken with American audiences generally and little of it is to be found in the domestic record catalogs. It is music that seems to be attractive outside of his native France only to scattered groups of his profound admirers, thus, we do not believe that the present recording, which by the way is an excellent one, will find any very large market here in America. Decca has seen fit to import these discs and so those connoisseurs who are interested may readily hear it at their dealers.

CHORAL



Bruckner: Mass No. 2 in E minor. Chorus and Orchestra of the Hamburg State Opera conducted by Max Thurn. 5-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EEL-2504. \$7.88.

The imported copies of this set were reviewed in the October 1938 issue of THE NEW RECORDS, from which the reader can easily gather that the work at hand was recorded more than a decade ago. And the same may be said for the other version of this work by the Aachen Cathedral Choir (Vic. DM-596). Of the two, both of which are now fortunately available at domestic prices, we would say the Aachen Choir sings with somewhat more inspiration and intensity and nicer quality of tone. Further, the recording captures more of the atmosphere in the Victor set. The Telefunken recording of the Hamburg choir and orchestra has a distant thinness which detracts from the general effect; we could not compensate for it with our volume or tone controls. The Telefunken set is a slightly cut version, occupying two sides less than the Victor performance.

While Capitol is housing its Telefunken series in beautiful leather-type albums, they are noticeably stingy with their program notes. We are always sensitive to brief or omitted program notes (after all, reviewers do lean on them too!). However, a work such as this deserves some outline and background for its various selections. All of Bruckner's music has a certain mystic or spiritual quality which distinguishes it. It is also unhurried, or as some find it, long-winded. This is probably a reflection of the man's serene and lovable character, and his many hours spent in the cathedral organ loft. His magnifi-

cent *E minor Mass* has a deep and inspiring grandeur which impresses itself deeply on one who can sit back and relax and concentrate upon its message. The *Kyrie* and *Sanctus* are especially fine, the concluding *Agnus Dei* is powerful and inspiring. The use of a wind choir with voices is skillful and produces effective contrasts. This masterpiece deserves renewed consideration from record collectors. S.

Parry: Blest Pair of Sirens. Oxford Bach Choir directed by Dr. Thomas Armstrong, and the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. Three sides, and **Parry: To Lucasta** and **Parry: To Althea.** Robert Irwin (baritone) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 2-12" discs (V-C-3820 and V-C-3821) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

As an example of fine English choral music, the British Council has arranged for this recording of Hubert Parry's *Ode at a Solemn Music: 'Blest Pair of Sirens.'* This work was first performed at Stanford (England) by the Bach Choir in 1887 and has enjoyed reasonable popularity in the composer's native country ever since. Parry was born at Bournemouth in 1848 and died at Knight's Croft, Rustington, in 1918.

The present work is a musical setting for chorus and orchestra of Milton's poem "At a Solemn Musick," the first line of which is "Blest Pair of Sirens." Parry has supplied some noble music in a more or less somber vein; music that is both impressive and enjoyable. It is not often that music of this character is available on records and so the arrival of this pair of discs from abroad is quite an occasion — one that lovers of choral music will mark as a red letter day.

While the reproduction is not perfect—a better balance between the choir and the orchestra might have been maintained—it is quite good enough to indicate what an English reviewer is pleased to call "the nobility and spacious grandeur of the music."

The fourth side of these discs contains two songs from Parry's third set of *English Lyrics* beautifully sung by Robert Irwin with impeccable accompaniments by Gerald Moore.

OPERA



Gounod: Faust (Complete Opera). (Sung in French). Geori-Boué (soprano); Huguette Saint-Arnaud and Betty Bannerman (mezzo-sopranos); Georges Noré (tenor); Roger Bourdon (baritone); Roger Rico and Ernest Frank (basses); and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, featuring Hubert Dawkes and Herbert Dawson (organs). 16-12" discs in 2 albums. RCA Victor Set DMC-124. \$22.

Complete recordings of opera are not ordinary events nowadays, and it is with this sentiment in mind that one hails this brand-new and complete

recording of Gounod's *Faust* released by RCA Victor.

That enterprising and greatly talented gentleman, Sir Thomas Beecham, brought a notable cast from the Paris Opera all the way to England especially to make this recording. It is no secret that Gounod's opera is a prime favorite of Sir Thomas.

This set will replace the one issued by Victor almost twenty years ago. The old set, however, had its advantages, for it included the generally omitted *Walpurgis Nacht* complete.

On playing through this set, one renews one's feeling that Gounod's is a great opera, particularly when presented as meticulously as it is here by Sir Thomas. Just to hear the famous *Soldiers' Chorus* under the baton of this distinguished musician is an experience.

The cast is excellent and, being French, has all the correct traditions. Mme. Geori-Boué, the Marguerite, is one of the present idols of Paris. This writer heard her with much pleasure last summer in a fine performance of *Mireille*. When one becomes accustomed to the very forward and penetrating placement of Mme. Boué's voice, one can take great pleasure in the extreme care and beauty of her phrasing, in the clarity of her diction, and in the fine range of her unusual voice. In the final trio the soprano's tones flow and soar effortlessly. She is equally effective in the romantic nuances of the Garden Scene or the drama of the Church Scene. Hers is a notable performance.

Opposite Mme. Boué we find a brilliant young tenor, Georges Noré, as Faust. M. Noré has a resonant voice of vibrant power. In the taking of his well sustained high notes he needs bow to nobody today. The high B in the *Kermesse* and the high C of *Salut demeure* are notes which should bring complete satisfaction to people who like to linger over such moments. The singer's voice is lacking in a certain romantic sensuousness, but it is a fine example of a good French tenor, nevertheless.

The Mephistopheles of Roger Rico does not erase memories of the late Marcel Journet in the first complete *Faust* albums. M. Rico lacks the subtlety and suave irony of his celebrated predecessor. Nor do voices like Journet's grow on every bush and tree. This young singer brings a good, clear tone and admirable diction to the part. It is obviously a voice of considerable size.

Mme. Boué's husband in private life, Roger Bourdin, is cast as Valentin. M. Bourdin is a famous singing-actor of the contemporary French operatic scene. The role of Valentin hardly gives his talents their necessary scope, though he handles the music with assurance and authority. Sir Thomas sees fit to omit the *Dio Possente*, probably for the reason that it was not part of the original score, but composed especially for Santley when the opera had its first London production. One has heard more impressive performances of Valentin's death than the

present one.

Where the Marguerite and Faust of this new set are far superior to those in the old one, the Mephistopheles and Valentin are not so good as their predecessors. The musical personality of Sir Thomas, however, obliterates anything in the way of conducting that occurred in the first version. It is he who breathes life and who invests the recording with his own particular genius. You feel him present on every one of the 32 record sides, and the impression of care for detail is marvellous, to say the least.

It is a happy occasion, this welcoming of a new and capitally presented *Faust*. The set should make many friends, all the more as the reproduction is a model of sanity, clarity and balance.

MAX DE SCHAUNSEE

Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onegin — Letter Scene (Act I, Scene II). (Sung in German). Ljuba Welitsch (soprano), with the Philharmonia orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-310. \$3.10.

Here is a recording that has been long needed. The Letter Scene from Tchaikovsky's *Eugen Onegin* is possibly the most famous and popular stretch in Russian opera.

Eugen Onegin was planned and begun in 1877; however, the composer wrote the Letter Scene first. February 1878 saw the opera completed, and it was given for the first time in 1879 at the Moscow Conservatoire.

There is no music more typical of its composer than the beautiful strains and melodies that adorn this scene in which Tatiana pours out her heart in a letter to the handsome guest who has made such an impression on her. The orchestration is also unusually interesting and scored with finesse and an evidently sure touch.

The scene is presented here complete on four record sides. The album marks the second release by Columbia of recordings by the sensational Bulgarian soprano, Ljuba Welitsch. Mme. Welitsch caused the greatest excitement at the Metropolitan this past winter, with her flaming *Salomé*, since the advent of Kirsten Flagstad in 1935.

These records prove conclusively that Mme. Welitsch is not merely a sensational singing-actress, an arresting stage figure, but that she is a singer in the real sense of the word.

The soprano's tones are clear, poised and penetrating. Her attack is unusually clean and sure, and there is no stooping or slithering in the instrumental legato of her phrasing.

Mme. Welitsch sings the scene with temperament, though her voice is more notable for clarity and purity than for any darkly sensuous quality. The breathless rapture of a young girl in the throes of first-love are admirably expressed by this greatly talented artist, who uses the German text.

Walter Süsskind and the Philharmonia Orchestra

accomplish wonders with the lovely orchestral portions, which are striking in their beauty. The recording is unusually fine.

MAX DE SCHAUNSEE

Wagner: Die Götterdämmerung — Brünnhilde Schlussgesang (Act III). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 3-12" discs in album (V-DBS-9323, V-DB-9324 and V-DB-9325) (automatic sequence). \$6.57.

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde — Isolde's Narrative & Curse (Act I). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) and Elizabeth Höngen (contralto) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. Three sides, and **Wagner: In Treibhaus** (from "Fünf Wesendonck Gedichte"). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 2-12" discs (V-DB-6748 and V-DB-6749) (manual sequence only). \$5.25.

Handel: Serse — Largo: Ombra mai fu (Act I). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Bizet: Agnus Dei**. (Sung in Latin). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite, featuring George Thalben-Ball (organ). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6791). \$2.63.

These records, recently made by Kirsten Flagstad in England, are possibly the best reproduction of what is without doubt one of the greatest voices of all time. The fabulously wonderful tones are present in all their former breadth and glory. In fact, an added lustre seems to be present. When one considers that these are the records of a woman of over 50, one can only pause and marvel.

Mme. Flagstad has recorded the Immolation Scene from *Götterdämmerung* once before, several years ago with Charles McArthur conducting. This performance was never considered satisfactory. Certainly, it cannot compare with the present one, where Wilhelm Furtwängler directs the Philharmonia. The only serious rival to this performance is the Traubel-Toscanini version. You had better listen to both before making a choice. The fact that Mme. Flagstad is more grandly equipped by nature than any living soprano for the singing of Wagner's heroic scenes may ultimately tip the scales in her direction. Furtwängler's part in this recording is on a level with the soloist, which is saying a great deal.

The *Tristan* passage, which is *Isolde's Narrative and Curse*, has a change of conductors — Issay Dobrowen, in this case — and adds a contralto, Elizabeth Höngen, for the lines of Brangaene. Mme. Flagstad sings this scene superbly. Her two high B's are far-flung, luminous sounds, and her description of the wounded *Tristan* — *er sah mir in die Augen* — is breathtaking in its purity and tenderness. The final curse is catapulted forth with all the strength and clarity of this voice among voices. On

the reverse side of the final *Tristan* side, we find the soprano singing a wondrously quiet performance of the lovely *Im Treibhaus*, with Gerald Moore giving flawless accompaniment at the piano.

Two other selections in this batch of Flagstad recordings are Bizet's *Agnus Dei* and Handel's *Largo*. Both are presented with organ and orchestra accompaniment. Again the clear, firm tones are present, though the great Norwegian sings these selections in a rather matter-of-fact manner. All these selections are marvellously well reproduced.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci—Prologue: *Si Può!* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6822). \$2.63.

We have just heard one of the most thrilling performances we have ever heard of the famous Prologue. Tito Gobbi is at his best on this disc—sympathetic, dramatic and in excellent voice. The shading and variety of color in his voice is something at which to marvel. The full orchestral part, which, by the way, is splendid, precedes the singing and thus we have a complete performance of this brilliant music. Especially fine reproduction is an added feature. Here is one of the best operatic singles that we have heard in months.

Cilèa: Adriana Lecouvreur—*Io sono l'umile ancilla* (Act I). One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by D. Marzollo. 1-12" disc (V-12-0658). \$1.31.

The aria from Cilèa's opera *Adriana Lecouvreur*, which is practically unknown in America, will be of particular interest to collectors of operatic recordings. The Mozart aria is available in recordings by Bidú Sayão and Eleanor Steber. Miss Albanese sings both selections very acceptably and because of the unusualness of the Cilèa number, the present disc should be of considerable interest.

Handel: Rodelinda—*Dove sei amato bene* (Act I). (Sung in English). One side, and **Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice**—*Che faro senza Euridice* (Act II). (Sung in English). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (D-K-1466). \$2.10.

Miss Ferrier, the well-known English contralto, turns in two sterling performances—the *Art thou troubled?* from Handel's little-known opera, *Rodelinda*, and the better-known *What is Life?* from Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. If you would like to surprise your friends, place this disc on a good instrument in the next room, and tell them that Miss Ferrier has come to pay you a visit. The reproduction is really lifelike.

VOCAL

Songs of Debussy and Ravel. Martial Singher (baritone) with the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maurice Abravanel. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-820. \$3.57. Also available on LP Microgroove, Coupled with French *Operatic Arias*. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4152). \$4.85.

Martial Singher, the eminent French baritone of the Metropolitan, is the perfect choice for the interpretation of these Debussy and Ravel songs. He has sung them often in his concerts and on his appearances with orchestras in this country; his success has been unvaried. The same success continues on the six record-sides contained in this compact little album.

The three *Ballades de Francois Villon* are among the most sophisticated and mature of Debussy's compositions. They catch the spirit of that medieval poet and the shadowy, semi-mystical era in which he lived in an uncanny way. The first song is addressed to Villon's false love; the second is an affirmation of his mother's unquestioning and devout faith, and the third an appraisal of the fascinations of the women of Paris.

The Ravel cycle, *Don Quixote a Dulcinée*, features fascinating and appropriate Spanish rhythms. These are songs of love, devotion and merrymaking. Ravel dedicated the second of the songs to Martial Singher, and the others to two famous French baritones—Roger Bourdin and Robert Couzinou—who are Singher's contemporaries and colleagues.

Singher has the elegance, the proper feeling, the diction that illuminates. This album is a notable addition to recorded French song-literature.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Folk Songs of Brazil. Bidú Sayão (soprano) accompanied by Milne Charnley (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-812. \$4.90.

This unusual little album finds Bidú Sayão singing eight folk songs from her native Brazil. Two cultural influences are felt in this music: that of Spain and Portugal, and that of the African Negroes, who were imported as slaves.

These songs cover many facets of life: religion, work, play and relaxation. Their rhythms and melodic line offer plenty of variety, from the dreamy lullaby, *Nigue, Nigue* and the romantically brooding *A Casinha Pequenina* to the bright chatter of *Engenho Novo!*, in which the sugar machine operators try to imitate the sound of their new engine, and *Sao-Joao-da-Ra-Rao*, a children's patter song.

Bidú Sayão, the charming lyric soprano of the Metropolitan, who is noted for her artistry as a Mozart singer and as an interpreter of romantic roles such as *Manon*, is a native of Brazil. It is only natural that she should want to sing the songs of her native land. As was to be expected, she sings them beautifully, and with complete authority. The



result is a rare treat for record collectors.

Milne Charnley is at the piano for Mme. Sayão, and the recording is clear and intimate.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Vaughan Williams: On Wenlock Edge. Peter Pears (tenor) with Benjamin Britten (piano) and the Zorian String Quartet. 3-10" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-67. \$3.94.

Such albums as this make a reviewer's life bearable. Hours upon hours are spent in listening to recordings of music that we have heard over and over again and then this little album appears; indeed it is truly refreshing. We are not going to try to prove that Vaughan Williams' musical settings of poems from A. E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad* are great music or that they are eminently profound, but we are going to state that as interpreted by that excellent singer, Peter Pears, they are highly enjoyable. The unusual accompaniment of a piano with string quartet is altogether charming; our only wish is that a better balance might have been maintained and that the accompaniment might have been given its proper prominence.

On Wenlock Edge is a song cycle consisting of the following six selections: *On Wenlock Edge*; *From far, from eve and morning*; *Is my team ploughing?* *Oh, when I was in love with you*; *Bredon Hill*; and *Clun*.

Negro Spirituals. Adelaide Hall (contralto), Kenneth Cantril (bass) with piano and organ accompaniments. 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-52. \$3.15.

We don't quite see why London decided to import these discs from England and release them in album form in this country. Certainly we have plenty of recordings of Negro spirituals over here that are equal to, or better than, these; however, they are here and those interested in music of this character may hear them.

In this album, Miss Hall sings: *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*; *By an' By*; and *Nobody Knows de Trouble I'se Seen*—Mr. Cantril sings: *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*; *Deep River*; and *My Lord, What a Morning*.

Maggie Teyte Collection. Maggie Teyte (soprano) with piano and orchestral accompaniments. 4-10" discs in album. London Set LA-66. \$4.99.

In the mid-thirties Maggie Teyte made a number of recordings in England of selections of a lighter nature, most of them from musical shows. London has imported some of these and they are being issued this month in the album listed above. We do not believe that they will be of great interest to American collectors. Of course, those who are making a collection of Maggie Teyte discs and wish that collection to be complete may wish to add this album to their libraries. For the general public there are better recordings of these selections available—see the vari-

ous domestic catalogs.

The present album contains: *I'll Follow My Secret Heart* and *Nevermore* from Noel Coward's "Conversation Pieces;" *What Is Done, You Never Can Undo* from "Lilac Domino;" *Deep in My Heart* from "The Student Prince;" from "Sir Roger de Coverly" there are *Carefree* and *Sweet Mistress Prue*. Two songs of Dvorák complete the collection: they are *Songs My Mother Taught Me* and *Christina's Lament*.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot. Paul Robeson (baritone) with vocal and piano accompaniments by Lawrence Brown. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-819. \$4.46. Also available on LP Micro-groove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2038). \$3.85.

This collection offers sixteen of the finest Negro spirituals. It includes the beloved *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* from which the album takes its name. Negro spirituals, especially when sung by an artist of Paul Robeson's stature and vocal quality, are an enriching experience to people of all races and creeds. Some of them, like *Poor Wayfarin' Stranger* and *Dere's a Man Goin' Round*, have a sense of noble tragedy. Others, such as *Git On Board*, *Little Chilien* and *Ev'ry Time I Feel De Spirit* have humor and strong rhythmic excitement. All speak eloquently of hope, faith, and goodness. Lawrence Brown plays a triple role as accompanying pianist, singer and arranger on these records.

Handel: Semele—Oh, sleep! why dost thou leave me? One side, and **Handel: Atalanta**—Care selve. (Sung in English). Ada Alsop (soprano) with the Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (D-K-1164). \$2.10.

We played the *Oh, sleep!* side first, and nearly dozed off! What soothing music this is! Another fine recording of this work has been done by Dorothy Maynor (Vic. 15826); we have no choice. Miss Alsop runs into more competition on *Care selve*: Noréna, Bampton, and Beckmann. Although we do not think a collector possessing any of the above would wish to rush out to replace it with Ada Alsop's version, we think future purchasers should give her disc serious consideration.

Excerpts from Lehar Operettas. (Sung in German). Anita Gura, Elizabeth Schwartzkopf, Martina Wulf (sopranos); Hugo Welfing, Rupert Glawitsch, Peter Anders (tenors); with choral and orchestral accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-2501. \$5.25.

These recordings were made by the famous Telefunken Company in Germany and are being repressed in this country by Capitol. For those who would like to hear excerpts from Lehar operettas sung as they are in the land of their birth, these discs are indicated. This album contains selections from *Paganini*; *The Merry Widow*; and *Count of Luxembourg*. The voices are excellent and the reproduction is satisfactory.

Schubert: Die Junge Nonne, Op. 43, No. 1. One side, and **Schubert: Gretchen am Spinnrade, Op. 2.** (Sung in German). Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) accompanied by Phyllis Spurr (piano). 1-12" disc (D-K-1632). \$2.10.

We rather believe that most music lovers will be highly pleased with Miss Ferrier's renditions of these well-known Schubert songs; if anyone is not, he can find other recordings of them. Lotte Lehmann has recorded both of these pieces very beautifully, and as far as we are concerned, it would be a choice between Miss Ferrier and Miss Lehmann.

Strauss Frühlingsstimmen, Op. 410. One side, and **Albiev: Russian Nightingale Song.** Erna Sack (soprano) with the Orchestra of the German Opera House conducted by Rolf Schroder and Dr. Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (CL-81000). \$1.32.

Recordings by the phenomenal German coloratura Erna Sack are appearing in America under a variety of labels. The present disc was released by Capitol and was pressed from German Telefunken masters. Technically, it rates with the best Erna Sack records we have heard. If this astounding singer is unknown to you, the disc listed above should make a very satisfactory introduction.

DeKoven: Oh, Promise Me. One side, and **Romberg: Serenade.** Jan Peerce (tenor) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Warner Bass. 1-12" disc. (V-12-0795). \$1.31.

Just in time for June weddings, Jan Peerce sings the ever-popular and appropriate *Oh, Promise Me*. It is coupled with Romberg's *Serenade* from "The Student Prince," which is also suitable for nuptial festivities. Mr. Peerce sings these selections beautifully and is nicely supported by an excellent chorus.

Purcell: Retir'd from any mortal's sight (from "King Richard II") and **Purcell: Sylvia, now your scorn give over.** One side, and **Purcell: I see she flies from me and Purcell: An Ode to Cynthia Walking on Richmond Hill.** Astra Desmond (contralto) accompanied by Harold Craxton (piano). 1-12" disc (D-K-1397). \$2.10.

Recordings of Purcell songs are few and far between and thus this fine disc is of more than ordinary importance. Miss Desmond's diction is excellent and she seems just in the proper mood for these selections. We are sure that the discerning music lover will find this disc highly acceptable. Reproduction — excellent.

Chansons Parisiennes. Edith Piaf (diseuse) with orchestral accompaniments. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set F-5. \$3.31.

Edith Piaf's fans never seem to get enough of her recordings — every album that she has recorded has enjoyed a substantial sale. Her songs of the

Paris streets and cabarets seem to touch a responsive chord in the hearts of her listeners whether they understand her Parisian French or not. She is unquestionably a unique artist and it is enough to let her admirers know that another collection of her songs is available on records.



VIOLONCELLO

A Piatigorsky Recital. Gregor Piatigorsky (violin-cello) accompanied by Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-808. \$4.15.

This album has been well named for it contains a most charming recital by one of the world's greatest violoncellists. Piatigorsky has chosen three lovely selections for his recorded recital — ones that should please any audience. He opens with his own arrangement for solo 'cello of Schubert's *Introduction, Theme and Variations in B flat major, Op. 82, No. 2* — a bright and cheerful selection that is bound to put everyone in a good humor. This is followed by *Fantasiestücke No. 1, Op. 73* by Schumann — a melodious piece romantic in character with a brilliant finale. Mr. Piatigorsky's concert closes with one of Fauré's loveliest and most poetic melodies — *Elégie, Op. 24*. This leaves us in a quiet mood in which we may reflect upon the exquisite music to which we have been listening during the last half-hour.



PIANO

Beethoven: Sonata No. 18, E-flat, Op. 31, No. 3. Five sides, and **Schubert: Impromptu in E-flat, Op. 90, No. 2.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-9303 to V-DB-9305) (automatic sequence). \$7.88.

A new recording by Wilhelm Backhaus will be the cause of much rejoicing among his many admirers in this country — it has been years since one was available. It is also very fortunate that Mr. Backhaus chose to record a Beethoven sonata that is not generally available in record form.

You will doubtless remember that Backhaus is of the German school; his playing reminds one very much of Artur Schnabel. Technically, he is superb and he gives a straightforward solid performance. It may lack a bit of the poetic, but it is impressive and one feels the strength of the giant Beethoven in his playing.

As we have never heard better piano reproduction, we can recommend this set of discs most highly.

Liszt: Ricordanza (Transcendental Etude No. 9). Egon Petri (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72792D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-123). 95c.

Petri is considered one of the greatest interpreters of Liszt and his playing of this lovely selection fully

justifies that designation. We assume that this recording was made several years ago, as we understand that Petri has retired to private life. The present disc is of particular importance because this Liszt piece is not listed in any of the domestic catalogs.

Piano Music of Mendelssohn. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DV-28. \$4.75. (TNR July '47).

Piano Music of Chopin and Liszt. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DV-29. \$4.75. (TNR July '48).

Moussorgsky: Pictures at an exhibition. Vladimir Horowitz (piano). 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DV-30. \$6. (TNR Nov. '48).

The three sets listed above have been reviewed in *THE NEW RECORDS* in the indicated issues, when the shellac pressings were received. We list them again to advise our readers that these sets are now available on smooth, non-breakable Vinylite surfaces.

VIOLIN



Paganini Caprices. Zino Francescatti (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-818. \$4.46.

Francescatti should and does play these famous caprices in the tradition of the legendary Paganini, for Zino's father, who was his only teacher, was a pupil of Sivori, the only violinist ever to study with Paganini. Thus, the tradition has been handed down in a direct line. Of the twenty-four caprices that Paganini wrote for unaccompanied violin, Francescatti has selected eight and presents them on these discs with highly artistic piano accompaniments provided for them by the Italian composer, Mario Pilati. Among the ones that have been selected are two very famous ones—No. 24 in A minor which was the basis for Brahms's *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* and also the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* by Rachmaninoff; and No. 9 in E major, which is particularly famous because of Liszt's transcription for piano.

Mantovani and his Violin. Mantovani (violin) accompanied by Harold Smart (organ). 3-10" discs in album. London Set LA-71. \$3.94.

Who remembers Eddie Cantor's old radio show? Remember "Rubinoff and his Violin"? Well, here is another Rubinoff, only with organ instead of orchestral accompaniment. Dinner music *par excellence*!

In this set Mantovani plays *Songs My Mother Taught Me*; *To a Wild Rose*; *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life*; *By the Waters of Minnetonka*; *Berceuse* (from "Jocelyn"); and *Dancing Doll*.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Deca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargell, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 4

JUNE, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

Music to My Ears. By Deems Taylor. xvi+288 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.

If you liked Deems Taylor's *Of Men and Music* and *The Well-Tempered Listener*, you will surely find his present book fascinating. Like its predecessors, it is based on his series of talks given in connection with CBS's Sunday afternoon broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra.

Music to My Ears is a lively and interesting book for music lovers but it is a difficult book to describe. Mr. Taylor starts out with four chapters about how a composer goes about writing a ballet for an opera on which he is working, and from then on he seems to fly in all directions at the same time. All one can say about what follows is that it concerns some phase of music—all of it is keen, much of it is witty, and some of it is informative. One amusing chapter is devoted to telling what the book is not about. In it the author quotes at length a letter he received from a listener criticising a talk he gave during the intermission of one of the concerts. He then proceeds to defend his spoken remarks and states that no one can help you to appreciate symphonic music by telling you about it but that the only way to get a proper knowledge of it is to hear it over and over again. Mr. Taylor closes this intriguing chapter by saying: "All of which is why this book is no treatise on music appreciation."

Music to My Ears is written for the general reader who is interested in music, and the book may be read at a rapid pace. It is the sort of book that one may pick up when one has a few minutes to spare, open to any chapter that looks interesting and proceed forward or backward; it won't make any difference.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of *THE NEW RECORDS*. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Tchaikovsky: *Concerto No. 2 in G major, Op. 44.* Shura Cherkassky (piano) and Santa Monica Symphony—Rachmilovich. 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-3). \$4.85.

Brahms: *Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in B minor, Op. 115.* Alfred Gallodoro and Stuyvesant Quartet. 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-4). \$4.85.

Brahms: *Sonata No. 1 in C major, Op. 1.* Ray Lev (piano). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-5). \$4.85.

Schumann: *Humoresque, Op. 20.* Paul Loyonnet (piano). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-6). \$4.85.

Schubert: *Quartet No. 10 in E-flat major, Op. 125, No. 1.* Guilet Quartet. 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-7). \$4.85.

Prokofieff: *Quartet No. 2 in F major, Op. 92.* Gordon Quartet. 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-8). \$4.85.

Bartók: *Quartet No. 4.* Guilet Quartet. 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-9). \$4.85.

Liszt: *Six grandes études de Paganini.* Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-10). \$4.85.

Grieg: *Sonata in A minor, Op. 36.* Roya Garbousova (violoncello) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-11). \$4.85.

Vivaldi-Bach—arr. Lev: *Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11.* One side, and Bach-Busoni: *Organ Prelude and Fugue in D major.* Ray Lev (piano). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-12). \$4.85.

Scottish Songs of Beethoven. Richard Dyer-Bennett (tenor). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-13). \$4.85.

Hindemith: *Ludus Tonalis.* Bruce Simonds (piano). 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-14). \$4.85.

Khachaturian: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra.* David Oistrakh (violin) and Russian State Symphony Orchestra—Gauk. 1-12" disc (ME-MG-10000). \$4.85.

Erna Sack Sings Strauss and Lehar. Erna Sack (soprano) with chorus and German Opera House orchestra. 1-12" disc (ME-MG-10001). \$4.85.

Tchaikovsky: *Overture 1812*, Op. 49. One side, and R. Strauss: *Don Juan*. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra—Mengelberg. 1-10" disc (ME-MG-15000). \$3.85.

Verdi: *Rigoletto* (excerpts). Pagliughi, Sved, and Orchestra of the Radio Italiana—Simonetto. 1-12" disc (CE-50.003). \$5.95.

Pergolesi: *La Serva Padrona*. Maria Erato (soprano), Aldo Bacci (basso) and Milan Philharmonic Orchestra—Pedrollo. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6600). \$5.95.

Mozart: *Concerto No. 9 in E-flat major*, K. 271. Gaby Casadesus (piano) and Lamoureux Orchestra—Paray. 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6500). \$4.85.

Schubert: *Trio in E-flat major*, Op. 100. Alma Trio. 1-12" disc (Allegro LA-1). \$4.85.

ORCHESTRA



Berlioz: *Symphonie Fantastique*, Op. 14. The Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 6-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-56. \$13.65.

Outstanding among all the sets in this reviewer's assignments for the month is the remarkable *Fantastique* by the Amsterdam Orchestra. Recorded in the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, a hall which has always produced good recording results, the reproduction achieved here is really thrilling. And no less exciting is Beinum's compelling reading of the difficult score. From the first record side, one is immediately aware that here is a conception of a complicated piece of music that is full of interest and inspiration. The old Concertgebouw Orchestra has lost none of its splendor under the new conductor, for they play with commendable finish and certainly with abundant spirit, in a performance obviously long- and well-rehearsed.

Of the several recordings of the *Fantastique*, our preference is for the present set, on the combined basis of reading and reproduction. However, the competition cannot be dismissed lightly. Monteux is internationally famous for his renditions of this work, and his San Francisco recording (Vic. DM-944) is also good mechanically. An earlier set by Monteux with the Paris Symphony, long since deleted, was a masterly performance; Bruno Walter and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, also deleted, gave us a less volatile but admirable version. Rodzinski and the Cleveland (Col. MM-488) has plenty of drive, but without the overall conception of Monteux or Beinum. Beinum's imported Decca set is a luxury well worth having; Monteux's is a masterly album at domestic prices.

Berlioz, the revolutionary, made two notable contributions to the evolution of music: the symphonic poem with leading motive, and the art of daring orchestration. His masterpiece, the *Fantastique*, was the

result of a turbulent period in his tragic life, when he was in the throes of an unrequited passion for the young actress who later yielded and became his wife. Reading the program and hearing the work, one is aware of how perfectly Berlioz portrayed the story which he outlined for the *Fantastique*. More libraries should house this great creation. S.

Schumann: *Symphony No. 4 in D minor*, Op. 120. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-821. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2040). \$3.85.

Three months ago we reviewed the Muench-London Philharmonic set (EDA-61) of this work, and found it very good. Now along comes another version, a very fine one too. It is easily the best of the domestic ones, for Szell has a crisp style which is effective in the end movements, and a kindly but steady hand with the lovely second movement *Romanze* and the *Scherzo*. There is more bite to his orchestra than Muench's Londoners and the reproduction emphasizes this feature. The recording is very sharply focused and impressed us as being unusual in that it has perspective while at the same time an effect of nearness to individual instruments. However you want to describe it, it is good and clear and lifelike. Muench enjoys good *ffrr* reproduction, which is rounder in tone. It just about boils down to a matter of price, with Szell being the better buy. Incidentally, Szell has made three fine "fourths"—Beethoven's, Mendelssohn's and Schumann's.

Sir Donald Tovey calls the *Fourth Symphony* "perhaps Schumann's highest achievement for originality of form and concentration of material." Philip Hale observes that its middle movements "breathe a romantic spirit that Schumann himself never surpassed as expressions of gentle, dreamy melancholy." Robert Haven Schauffler dubs it "the most Schumannian of the symphonies." We think they have described the work well, but Morris Hastings does even better: "It is lyrical and tender rather than passionate; its poetry is of the pastoral school and not of the epic; it is fancifully and not sumptuously colored." Such comments help us to enjoy a work and we suggest them as a starting point for your enjoyment. S.

Prokofieff: *Scythian Suite*, Op. 20. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-827. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with Respighi: *Feste Romane*, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4142). \$4.85.

Just about three years ago RCA Victor issued a fine recording of this work by the Chicago Symphony under the brilliant direction of Désiré Defauw. It enjoyed a reasonably large sale for an item of such an unusual nature. It is unusual music to say the least. We can hardly see the need of another recording of this composition but we suppose that Columbia wished it in its catalog; thus music lovers now have a choice

of interpretation and performance. We have the Defauw version in our library and we are thoroughly satisfied with it. We compared it with Ormandy's new recording and we think that Defauw does a better job. Perhaps it is because we are more familiar with it; so don't rely too much on our judgment—try both before you decide.

For those who are not familiar with this Prokofieff opus which is not heard very often, the following notes may be of interest: Prokofieff wrote the *Scythian Suite* over thirty years ago. It was first performed in Petrograd in 1916 with the composer conducting.

In this suite, Prokofieff attempts with rare success to depict the Scythians, a barbarous pagan race who roamed the steppes of southern Russia from the 8th to the 2nd century before Christ. They worshipped many wild gods and participated in weird ceremonies with their attending furious and exciting dances. Prokofieff has caught the spirit of these savage nomads and realistically portrays them in this lively work. The suite is composed of four sections bearing the following titles: *Adoration of Véless and Ala*; *The Hostile-God and the Dance of the Dark Spirits*; *The Night*; and *Glorious Departure of Lolly and Cortège of the Sun*.

Just in passing, we might remark, that if you find Stravinsky's *Sacre du printemps* to your liking, you will more than likely find the *Scythian Suite* mighty attractive.

Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, C minor, Op. 62.
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by
Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6625).
\$2.63.

Many important orchestras throughout the world have made recordings of this well-known Beethoven work, and now we have a version by the Vienna Philharmonic under Furtwängler. We would not say that it is the best of the lot but it rates with the best. We would give the edge to the NBC Symphony with Toscanini or the London Symphony directed by Bruno Walter. If you have the opportunity it might be interesting to compare these three versions.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56
(“Scotch”). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Artur Rodzinski. 4-12" discs in album.
RCA Victor Set DM-1285. \$6.

It has taken quite a while, but we finally have a completely enjoyable recording of the *Scotch Symphony*. Rodzinski is energetic and poetic, brilliant and sweet, taut and relaxed, all in the proper place. The orchestra plays with perfect polish and ingratiating tone, accurate but resilient. The reproduction is nice and roomy, showing off the orchestra and Rodzinski's reading to the best advantage. It outstrips competition with ease. Mitropoulos' set (Col. MM-540) suffered atrocious reproduction; Iturbi's album (Vic. DM-699) was quite good although he was a little heavy handed with the music and his recording is not

in a class with the newer one of Rodzinski.

The *Scotch Symphony* has played second fiddle to the popular *Italian Symphony* for so long that the former is often forgotten. This is unfortunate for the *Scotch* has much to offer in the way of typical Mendelssohnian grace and charm and his utterly unique melodic gift. A very appealing work, it has no program, although its inspiration stemmed from a visit to Scotland. Mendelssohn did not complete the work until thirteen years after the visit, and it is in fact, not his third, but his last symphonic creation. By all means hear it, particularly this superb rendition which we are highly pleased to welcome to the catalogs. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 6 in F, Op. 68 (“*Pastoral*”). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-95. \$11.55.

Here is a beautiful performance, splendidly reproduced. Kleiber is an outstanding conductor, not too well-known over here, but respected by many in the countries where he has appeared. He is of the older German school of conductors and does things in an orderly and sane manner. His *Pastoral* is a model of how a work may be played simply, beautifully, musically, and made to sound pleasant and convincing without resorting to any overstatement or individual touches. This version could hardly be called brilliant, but then we do not believe the *Pastoral* should be flashy. It is a gentle day in the country, savory of country fragrances, with bird songs in the air, brooklets rippling, and a general feeling of well-being pervading the atmosphere. Kleiber evokes all these delicate experiences with a gracious art. The Peasant's Merrymaking, and the Storm are orderly and musical and of course effective.

For the best recorded version of the *Pastoral* we find a couple of choices. Certainly Bruno Walter and the Philadelphia Orchestra (Col. MM-631) have much to offer in their excellently recorded set. More of the virtuoso touch throughout the reading, but a warm underlying sympathy and great authority. Toscanini and the BBC Orchestra (Vic. DM-417) are fine in this work, although the reproduction is not of the latest. Stokowski has a well reproduced version (Vic. DM-1032) laced with luscious orchestral tone. We prefer them in the order they appear in this article. S.

Chausson: Symphony in B flat, Op. 20. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-825. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4141). \$4.85.

For those who are not familiar with this work, we can state the case briefly by saying that if you like Franck's *Symphony in D minor* you will very likely be attracted to this work. Resemblance between the two works is striking; in fact it is almost embarrassing. In his notes, Morris Hastings lists the similarities concisely: “Apart from the spiritual kinship of the two

works and certain thematic similarities, Chausson's symphony has a number of points in common with Franck's sole venture into this field. Both are in only three movements; both are predominantly chromatic; both employ the 'cyclic' structure in which themes from the first movement recur in the finale; an English horn is used in the slow movements, an innovation made by Franck." Having been a pupil of César Franck, Chausson was also a devoted and ardent champion of the master.

Mitropoulos displays a fine feeling for the dreamy and subtle facets of the score and plays it with sincerity and warmth. All the niceties are captured in the recording, which is not outstanding in quality but quite good. Stock and the Chicago orchestra made a recording several years ago (Vic. DM-950) which is also an excellent performance and good recording, being more resonant than the present set. The only other recording ever made was an old one by Copola, now deleted from the catalog.

If you are looking around for some symphonic fare similar to your favorites and easy to take at first hearing, you will very likely find it in the Chausson *Symphony*. S.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36.
The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 5-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-83. \$11.55.

Last year, in the May 1948 issue, we reviewed Ormandy's recording (Col. MM-736) of this popular symphony, and proclaimed it the best available. Its reproduction by Columbia's new method was explained, and the overall qualities of interpretation and reproduction were found to be first rate. We now have a worthy competitor. As fond as we are of English Decca recordings, there is precious little to recommend this over the domestic Columbia. At times the English string tone sounds better, but in several spots, Ormandy seems to receive fairer reproduction. There is no denying that Ormandy has the better orchestra for finish and detail. Sargent has a few arbitrary ideas about tempo, but on the whole his reading is very straightforward; it is not quite as dramatic as Ormandy's.

Many of Decca's recordings of the "war-horses" are exceptional in reproduction and performance, in which case they are worth more than the domestic prices. In this instance we do not find the additional values to warrant acquiring the imported. S.

Debussy: La Mer. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-88. \$7.35.

La Mer is one of Debussy's masterpieces. Two years in composition, the score is as amazing to a musician as to the average hearer. Musically it has subtleties and values that make it unique; to the listener it is a series of pictures of the sea that are unmistakably colorful and suggestive of all the various aspects a sea can bring to the imagination. It is

in three sections, each occupying two record sides: From Dawn 'til Noon on the Sea, Play of the Waves, Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea. Needless to say the music is impressionistic, but inoffensive to anyone by its means.

That it takes consummate skill and knowledge on the part of the conductor to perform this music, can be easily appreciated. We now have three fine recordings of this glorious work and it is a difficult matter to rate them. We would say that it is a toss-up between the present recording and that of Rodzinski and the Cleveland Orchestra for first place with the Boston Symphony under Koussevitzky a very close third. As all of these sets are readily available, it is an easy matter for the music lover to make his own choice. No matter which one he chooses he will have a grand recording of this fascinating music.

Fauré: Pelleas et Mélisande. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-58. \$5.25.

Since Koussevitzky's version of Fauré's incidental music to Maeterlinck's fantasy, *Pelleas et Mélisande*, has been deleted from the Victor catalog, the present version is more than welcome. The former was not complete, omitting the *Sicilienne*; however, were it available and complete, we feel that Mr. Münch's superb conducting plus the added feature of *ffrr* reproduction would make most thoughtful collectors prefer the present set.

The suite is divided into four parts: the dreamy, shadowy *Prélude*; *Fileuse*, wherein the whirr of the spinning wheel is suggested; the charming and nostalgic *Sicilienne*; and the somber *Death of Mélisande*. After listening to this music we wonder why Fauré is not played more often in this country; here, certainly, is beautiful music. One can hear this famous teacher's influence on Ravel, Boulanger, Enesco, and Aubert—all of whom were pupils of Fauré.

Mr. Münch turns in a sterling performance; one cannot imagine a better one. This man is certainly gaining in popularity in this country among discerning music lovers; if you have met neither Münch nor Fauré on records as yet, here is a pleasant introduction to both; if you have already met one or both, you will surely want to investigate this set, too. J.

Mozart: Serenade No. 10 in B-flat major, K. 361.
Members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1303. \$6.

This is the first domestic recording of this glorious serenade for 13 wind instruments, and the players from the Boston Symphony certainly give a performance that calls for the highest praise. Victor has matched their playing with equally fine reproduction and thus we have an album that may be recommended without reservation.

Here is music that most anyone may enjoy—music that one may hear over and over again without becoming weary of it. We doubt whether Mozart ever

wrote more soulful melodies than will be found in the beautiful *Adagio* of this work.

Scriabin: Poème d'Extase, Op. 54. San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1270. \$2.62.

(Two-pocket plain albums available for envelope sets at 65¢ each.)

It has been seventeen years since we have had a recording of this work. Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra recorded it in 1932. It is not a composition that everyone will enjoy—one must be in the mood to appreciate the music of Scriabin. This Russian "Musical Mystic" does have a certain very devoted following and a modern recording of one of his more important orchestral works should receive an enthusiastic reception from the limited number of music lovers who make up his cult. Monteux is an ideal interpreter of Scriabin and gives what seems to us to be a superb performance.

R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 2-12" discs in folder. RCA Victor Set DM-1289. \$2.62.

(Two-pocket plain albums available for envelope sets at 65¢ each.)

Of the many recordings that have been made of this popular work up until this time, we would pick the National Symphony version under Sidney Beer (Decca set EDA-15) as the best. It was well received when it arrived in this country from England and has enjoyed a continued sale. Now, however, we rather feel that the present Koussevitzky recording will be the favorite, especially in view of the fact that it is about one-half the price. The Boston Symphony certainly gives a grand performance and while the RCA Victor reproduction may not be quite up to English Decca's *ffrr* recording, it is mighty good.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in F major. Five sides, and Bach—arr. Hodge: *Mortify Us Through Thy Grace*. Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-87. \$7.35.

Suk: Serenade for String Orchestra, Op. 6. Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-66. \$7.35.

Recordings by the Boyd Neel Orchestra are very popular in England and when one listens to these two albums it is very easy to understand why. There are several adequate versions of the *Brandenberg Concerto No. 1* available on domestic records, and so the first item listed above is not of too much importance; but there is none of the *Suk Serenade* and thus that album should be of particular interest to discerning music lovers. It is a lovely work and one that may be easily appreciated at first hearing. As it is practically unknown in this country, it will offer something new and, we are quite sure, pleasing to most listeners.

Berlioz: Le Carnaval Romain Overture, Op. 9. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Victor de Sabata. 1-12" disc (D-K-1552). \$2.10.

Rossini: Tancredi—Overture. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Olof. 1-12" disc (D-K-1324). \$2.10.

Tchaikovsky: The Swan Lake Ballet Suite—Waltz. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sidney Beer. One side, and *Nicolai: The Merry Wives of Windsor—Overture*. National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Victor Olof. 1-12" disc (D-K-1308). \$2.10.

These three imported discs feature two of England's outstanding orchestras and further demonstrate the high fidelity of English Decca's *ffrr* reproduction. All of the selections are well known and receive competent performances here.

Delibes: Coppelia (excerpts). Six sides, and *Delibes: Sylvia (excerpts)*. Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1305. \$7.25. Also available on 45 rpm discs, WDM-1305. \$5.51.

These charming melodies from Delibes' most popular ballets make mighty pleasant listening for a summer evening—they are delicate, tuneful, and altogether fascinating in their graceful way. Fabien Sevitzky presents them with a fine sense of the artistic and the recording has been nicely accomplished by RCA Victor.

Rose: Holiday for Strings. One side, and *Rose: Our Waltz*. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1311). \$1.05. Also available on 45 rpm discs (V-49-0407). \$1.

David Rose's most popular composition *Holiday for Strings* coupled with his *Our Waltz* are contained on this disc—played in fine style by the Boston "Pops." If you are not tired of *Holiday for Strings*, you'll probably think this little record is okeh.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or—Introduction; Cortège des Noces. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Albert Coates. 1-12" disc (D-K-1330). \$2.10.

The fascinating music of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Le Coq d'Or* is superbly presented by Albert Coates and the London Symphony on this fine disc. Excellent reproduction has been nicely accomplished by English Decca.

A Grieg Program. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia) conducted by Morton Gould. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-824. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2031). \$3.85.

Morton Gould has selected nine short pieces from the works of the well-known Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg, to form this attractive program—din-

ner music *par excellence* or pleasing melodies for the pensive mood. Among them are selections from the "Peer Gynt" Suites, and the "Lyric Suite," together with some Norwegian Dances and other brief works. They have been beautifully played and splendidly recorded.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Stravinsky—arr. Stravinsky, Dushkin: *Divertimento for Violin and Piano*. Five sides, and **Stravinsky**—arr. Stravinsky, Dushkin: *Danse Russe*. Ida Haendel (violin) and Ivor Newton (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-109. \$7.35.

This *Divertimento* was drawn from Stravinsky's ballet *Le Baiser de la Fée* which was commissioned by Mme. Ida Rubinstein in 1927. This ballet was based on melodies from the pen of Tchaikovsky and was dedicated by the composer to "the Muse of Peter Tchaikovsky." In 1932, Stravinsky and Samuel Duskin were planning a concert tour and they together adapted the present work from the orchestral suite that the composer had developed from the music of the ballet.

Most of the melodies have been taken from Tchaikovsky's vocal and piano pieces and have been developed in a most interesting fashion—one might almost say that they have been improved. The present players have recorded an excellent performance and the reproduction is of the very best. We found this not very well-known piece quite interesting and so recommend it to the discerning.

Mozart: *Sonata No. 24 in C, K. 296*. Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). Three sides and **Mozart**—arr. Heifetz: *Minuet* (from "Divertimento No. 7 in D, K. 334"). 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1290. \$2.62.

There are already two excellent recordings of this lovely Mozart work available: one by Milstein (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano) (Col. Set MX-143) and another by Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord) (Col. Set MM-650). We doubt whether those persons who have either of the previous sets in their libraries will think that the present version by Heifetz and Bay is sufficiently better to warrant its purchase. Our choice of the three would certainly be the Schneider-Kirkpatrick album—we much prefer the harpsichord to the piano in Mozart compositions of this character.

Mozart: *Quartet No. 15, in D minor, K. 421*. Seven sides, and **Purcell**—arr. Warlock: *Four Part Fantasia No. 9*. Griller String Quartet. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-75. \$9.45.

Mozart: *Sonata No. 40 in B-flat major, K. 454*, for *Violin and Piano*. George Kulenkampff (violin) and Georg Solti (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-108. \$7.35.

Both of these recordings received high praise when

they were released in England, and that is probably the reason that Decca imported these discs for sale in this country. However, as fine domestic versions are readily available, it is not likely that the imported discs will enjoy very large sales. If price is not a factor with you, we suggest that you investigate these albums; they are indeed very fine.

CONCERTO



Schumann: *Concerto in A minor, Op. 54*. Moura Lympany (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Royalton Kisch. 4-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-96. \$9.45.

The loveliest of romantic concertos, one to which everyone, critic and casual music lover alike, seems to cling, is also a very difficult work to perform. It has had a peculiar recording history, for no truly outstanding performance has ever been recorded. The best domestic cutting is Serkin and Ormandy (Col. MM-734), although the old Myra Hess reading is considered by many to be ideal. She, unfortunately, suffered from poor reproduction and not too good accompaniment.

The present set is rather a prosaic and undistinguished reading. It is undistinguished both ways—not particularly subtle, romantic, or charged with feeling, and yet not offensive, mannered, or overly lush. It is just an honest statement of the music which was not visited by inspiration at the recording session. It was recorded at a lower than usual level for *ffrr*, the result being a clear sweet tone more suited to a Mozart concerto. We would have preferred more body and warmth to the reproduction. If none of the domestic versions appeal to you, try this one for its sober values; otherwise, hear Serkin first then Rubinstein (Vic. DM-1176). S.

Mozart: *Concerto in C major, K. 299*, for *Flute, Harp and Orchestra*. René Le Roy (flute), Lili Laskine (harp) and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1292. \$4.75.

(This annotation is reprinted from the April 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

Mozart wrote this work in Paris in 1778 for the use of the Duke de Guines and his daughter. The Duke was an admirable flautist, as Mozart himself testified, and his daughter was an equally accomplished harpist. Mozart, brought to the attention of the Duke by Grimm, was commissioned to write a flute and harp concerto; and though, according to Jahn, these instruments were by no means Mozart's favorites, "the fact did not prevent his accomplishing his task to the satisfaction of the Duke."

Perhaps some may feel that the Duke was rather easily satisfied because the work is certainly not one of Mozart's best. It has, it is true, many lovely moments, but much of it is rather routine and without the sparkle for which the composer is noted.

If you are interested, you will find the present performance just about as fine a one as could be wished for. The soloists are superb; and with the meticulous direction of Sir Thomas Beecham, who is our favorite conductor of Mozart, this recording presents the music in the most attractive manner possible. Many years ago, the present harpist, Lili Laskine, made a recording of this work with Marcel Moyse (flute) and an orchestra directed by Piero Coppola.

R.

Bruch: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26. Ida Haendel (violin) with the Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 3-12" discs in album (V-C-7733 to V-C-7735). \$5.99.

The domestic catalogs contain two splendid recordings of this tuneful concerto—one by Milstein and another by Menuhin. It would therefore seem wholly unnecessary to import yet another one. However, the present version received high praise from the English critics. Most of them called particular attention to the brilliant playing of the young violinist, Ida Haendel, and also to the superb orchestral support under the baton of the thirty-five year old conductor, Rafael Kubelik. Rafael is the son of the world-famous violinist, Jan Kubelik.

While Miss Haendel's recording will probably not enjoy a large sale in this country, it may be that there will be enough music lovers over here who are interested to take care of the few copies that have been imported.

Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat major, K. 191, for Bassoon and Orchestra. Leonard Sharow (bassoon) and the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1304. \$2.62. Also available on 45 rpm discs, WDM-1304. \$2.31.

(Two-pocket plain albums available for envelope sets, 65¢ each.)

About a decade ago RCA Victor added to its domestic catalog a European recording of this interesting Mozart opus featuring the distinguished French oboe soloist, Fernand Oubradous. Although the present soloist, Leonard Sharow, is a really fine artist, we would not say that his performance is in any way superior to Oubradous' but he has the advantage of the support of the celebrated NBC Symphony under Toscanini and that definitely tips the scale in favor of the version released this month.

This little work, written when Mozart was but a boy of eighteen, is a lovely bit of music that cannot help appealing to the discerning music lover. It has been splendidly recorded.

Mozart: Concerto No. 25 in C, K. 503. Edwin Fischer (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 4-12" discs in album (V-DB-9287 to V-DB-9290) (automatic sequence). \$10.50.

In one respect, at least, this set is absolutely and perfectly satisfying—that of reproduction. If this is

HMV's answer to Decca's *ffrr*, it is a mighty good one, and the issue will have to be decided by the rebuttals! The recording is matchless and we cannot imagine any reproducer, an ordinary one or one capable of the highest fidelity, on which this set will not thrill the listener with its clarity, timbre and resonance. You will not find the piano tone the most beautiful on records because Fischer does not possess ravishing tone as one of his assets. But the piano sounds like a piano in every respect.

Fischer's style is a unique thing which you may or may not like. Many consider him an outstanding performer of Mozart, but it is the clear, cool type rather than the limpid, liquid type. Krips has a Mozartian style which we think is nearly ideal, and the orchestra plays with superb finish and quality of tone.

No other recording exists of the K. 503, except an oldish Decca by Kathleen Long and the Boyd Neel Orchestra, not too excellent a version. Actually this work was the twenty-first in order of composition, and authorities have differed in appraising it, some calling it a disappointment, others claiming it exalted and victorious. Our scholarship does not extend that far, all we know is that we like it, especially in this recording.

OPERA



R. Strauss: Salome—Final Scene: Salome und das Haupt des Jokanaan. (Sung in German). Ljuba Welitsch (soprano) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-316. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Tchaikovsky: Eugen Onegin**—Letter Scene. Ljuba Welitsch. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2048). \$3.85.

When Ljuba Welitsch and Fritz Reiner made their Metropolitan opera debuts on February 4, 1949, with a performance of Richard Strauss' *Salome*, it was the biggest event at this distinguished house since the debut of Kirsten Flagstad 14 years before.

History was made on that earlier occasion; it was repeated on that February night of the season just ended.

Ljuba Welitsch was unanimously acclaimed as the finest Salome of recent years and her subsequent performances of the rôle were occasions that became sell-outs at the box-office. Mr. Reiner's capabilities as an operatic conductor were well-known, and he, too, caused the press to bring forth its list of superlatives.

With such a thundering success, it was only natural that Columbia should in all haste present records of this occasion, all the more as Mme. Welitsch, Mr. Reiner and the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra were under contract.

The final scene of the opera, which is its musical climax, was recorded during March in the opera house. It is now available to the public on four record-sides or on one long-playing surface. The scene is presented complete, and much of the excitement of

the opera house and of an actual occasion has been re-captured.

Mme. Welitsch's beautiful voice soars and flows effortlessly over the reverberations of Strauss' orchestra, which Mr. Reiner quite properly keeps at high voltage. The purity and penetrating quality of this voice is ever apparent; the texture is crystalline rather than steely.

Mr. Reiner gets the maximum of effect out of his orchestra, and both he and the soloist give a memorable performance of one of the most gruesome and compelling scenes in opera.

It is a pleasure to report that the recording is an excellent job.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Operatic Arias. Cesare Siepi (basso) with orchestra conducted by Arturo Basile. 2-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 116. \$4.73.

Verdi: Don Carlos — Ella giammai m'amò (recit.); Domirò sol nel manto regal (aria) (Act IV).

Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani — O tu, Palermo (Act II).

Boito: Mefistofele — Son lo spirito che nega (Act I).

Mozart: Don Giovanni — Madamina, il catalogo (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Italo Tajo (basso) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Mario Rossi. 1-10" disc (CE-2049). \$1.33.

Puccini: La Bohème — Vecchia zimarra (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Gounod: Faust** — Sérénade: Vous qui faites l'enormie (Act IV). (Sung in French). Italo Tajo (basso) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Mario Rossi. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-2050). \$1.84.

Cetra records by two young Italian bassos prove interesting this month. Italo Tajo has made himself well-known in America through an unusually successful first season, while Cesare Siepi has yet to be heard in this country; but, given his youth and talents, he undoubtedly will be in years to come.

Mr. Tajo's voice is smooth and easily managed in the Serenade from *Faust*, sung in respectable but hardly idiomatic French, and the *Vecchia Zimarra* from *Bohème*. The latter is a gem of *mezza-voce* singing. The popular basso also further strengthens the belief that he is an exceptionally gifted Mozart singer with a cleanly articulated, lightly sung Catalog Aria from *Don Giovanni*. This is possibly the best performance of this selection on records.

Mr. Siepi, with whom this reviewer was much impressed in a performance of Verdi's *Aida* at Milan's famous *La Scala* last summer, is still in his twenties.

He is a natural singer with a smooth and admirably produced voice. The tone is not exceptionally large or brilliant, but it carries well, and Mr. Siepi knows how to phrase.

An uncut version of Philip II's great scene from Verdi's *Don Carlos* is capitally presented by the

young basso. With the exception of a phrase whose intonation is uncertain, this is a fine performance of one of Verdi's most characteristic scenes. Selections from Boito's *Mefistofele* and Verdi's *Vespri Siciliani* also display the new singer as an artist of genuine promise.

Recording and surfaces are the best heard so far on Cetra releases.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri — Per lui che adoro (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Conchita Supervia (mezzo-soprano), Nino Ederle (tenor), Carlo Scattola and Vincenzo Bettoni (bassos), with orchestral accompaniment. One side, and **Rossini: La Cenerentola** — Signore, una parola (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Conchita Supervia (mezzo-soprano) and Vincenzo Bettoni (basso) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (PA-PXO-1021). \$2.10.

It has been a long time since this fine record by the fabulous Conchita Supervia has been available in this country. A few copies were received in a recent shipment from abroad and we are mentioning the fact for the benefit of those of our readers who may be interested in securing a copy.

Verdi: Don Carlos — Ella giammai m'amò (recit.); Domirò sol nel manto mio regal (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Ezio Pinza (basso) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleve. 1-12" disc (C-72802D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-148). 95¢.

Of the several recordings that have been made of this famous aria, the present one by Ezio Pinza is by far the most desirable. Here is an item that will be of certain interest to all opera lovers.

Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron — Als flotter Geist doch früh verwaist (Act I). One side, and **Strauss** — arr. Korngold: **Walzerlied** (based on "Tales from the Vienna Woods"). (Sung in German). Mario Berini (tenor) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Emil Cooper. 1-12" disc (C-72459D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-124). 95¢.

Mario Berini, of the Metropolitan, sings these tuneful selections in the spirit of German light opera at its best. This is not a disc of much importance but a very pleasing one to which to listen.

VOCAL

Debussy: Cinq Poèmes de Charles Baudelaire. Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Erich Itor Kahn (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-828. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with *A French Song Recital*, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4158). \$4.85.

It has been quite some time since a new release



by Jennie Tourel has appeared; therefore an occasion which is a pleasure under any circumstance becomes even more so. There is no more refined and stylistically elegant singer today than this extraordinarily gifted mezzo-soprano.

Here we have an album containing Debussy's song-cycle, *Cinq Poèmes de Charles Baudelaire*. It was composed in 1887 and reveals the distinctive style of this great French musician in characteristic fashion. The poems taken from the 19th century poet's *Fleurs du Mal* have a certain sameness. They discuss love and longing, evening and sunset, flowers and perfumes throughout their romantic lines. Debussy's music, for that matter, bears the imprint of a certain monotony—but it is a charming and effective monotony, sophisticated and calculated.

Miss Tourel is just the singer for these songs. Her impeccable sense of style and her beautifully-schooled, dark mezzo voice, with its ravishing pianissimi are just the mediums for this fastidious fare. It is also of much interest to observe that only one of these songs, *Jet d'Eau*, is represented in contemporary catalogs. The others have been languishing for fine, up-to-date recordings, and here they are with a vengeance.

Erich Itor Kahn supplies the delicately colored accompaniments, and Columbia may be congratulated on an altogether fine accomplishment.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Ravel: Shéhérazade. Susanne Danco (soprano) with L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 2-12" discs in album. Decca Set EDA-100. \$5.25.

This set of three songs constitutes Ravel's only composition in this form with orchestral accompaniment. *Shéhérazade* was composed in 1903, Ravel availing himself of some poems by his friend Tristan Klingsor, the pseudonym for the writer, Léon Leclerc.

This early Ravel work is full of atmosphere and an exoticism, such as was rampant in French art and music during the first decade of the present century.

The three poems—*Asie*, *L'Indifférent*, and *La Flute Enchantée*—constitute a song-cycle which offers brilliant opportunities to the singer as well as to a conductor who has a penchant for fastidious orchestral color.

In the last five years, three versions of Ravel's song-cycle have appeared on records—one by Janine Micheou, another by Maggie Teyte, and the present and latest version with Suzanne Danco and the Orchestra de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris, under the distinguished conductor, Ernest Ansermet.

Mlle. Danco, a newcomer to American record-collectors, has a firm, fresh soprano voice of admirable range. She enunciates the colorful text with great clarity and meaning. Ansermet's conducting is the acme of refinement.

Decca's famous *ffrr* recording process is particularly welcome in music of subtle tints and nuances such as this.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Rodgers: South Pacific. Mary Martin, Ezio Pinza, and members of the original cast with chorus and orchestra conducted by Salvatore Dell'Isola. 7-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-850. \$7.14. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4180). \$4.85.

Unquestionably *South Pacific* is a tremendous success in New York. Based on Michener's Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Tales of the South Pacific*, this latest offering of the incomparable team of Rodgers and Hammerstein has all the ingredients for a hit show: big names, music everyone can and wants to hum, and a subject brim full of human interest.

Columbia has lost no time in getting Mary Martin, Ezio Pinza, and the rest of the original cast to record nearly all of the numbers from *South Pacific*; leading dealers in Philadelphia and New York report large numbers of advance orders, and it would seem that the present set will rival the recent Columbia *Kiss Me, Kate* (TNR March '49) in sales.

The cast and the recording technicians have done a great job. Anyone who has seen the show will surely want this set as a memento; others may be sure of pleasing music—the sort of thing you can always count on to entertain friends who come to call.

Symphonic Songs. Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano) with orchestra conducted by Morris Stoloff. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-826. \$4.46. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2039). \$3.85.

Risë Stevens, equally at ease in a Bing Crosby picture or in the title role of a Metropolitan *Carmen*, here sings melodies derived from works of five great composers. The tunes were, and possibly are still, very popular.

The titles of the songs Miss Stevens sings are indicated in italics; the original work follows the title in parentheses: *Tonight We Love* (Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor); *Moon Love* (Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor); *Full Moon and Empty Arms* (Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor); *As Years Go By* (Brahms: Hungarian Dance No. 4); *Strange Music* (Grieg: Nocturne and Wedding Day at Troldhaugen); *The Lamp Is Low* (Ravel: Pavane pour une Infante défunte); *Our Love* (Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet); and Rubinstein's song *Since First I Met Thee*.

Folk Songs of the British Isles. Robert Merrill (baritone) accompanied by Leila Edwards (piano). 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1306. \$4. Also available on 45 rpm discs, WMO-1306. \$3.51.

Metropolitan Opera baritone Robert Merrill's choice of an album of folk songs of the British Isles provides a fresh, off-the-beaten-track addition to the RCA Victor catalog. These are songs which Merrill has sung with resounding success on his concert tours. These simple, touching old English and Irish melodies, tender, colorful and gay in turn, make easy listening

the year round, and are sung with an intelligence and vocal beauty that are fresh evidence of the young baritone's constantly growing artistry.

Included in the group are *Phyllis Has Such Charming Graces*; *My Lovely Celia*; *Mary of Allendale*; *Down By the Sally Gardens*; *Come Let's Be Merry*; *The Ballymure Ballad*; and *Oliver Cromwell*.

Sympathetic accompaniment at the piano is provided by Miss Leila Edwards, Merrill's regular concert accompanist.

Songs by Erna Sack. Erna Sack (soprano) with orchestral and choral accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-2500. \$5.25.

These Capitol discs were pressed from German Telefunken masters and give as faithful reproductions of the phenomenal coloratura, Erna Sack, as are presently available. Her many admirers in this country will very likely find this set of discs of prime interest.

The first two sides of these records contain a medley of songs for which Miss Sack is famous; the remaining four sides contain: *Parla Valse* (Arditi); *Funiculi*, *Funicula* (Denza); *Jubilate* (Silcher); and *Swallows from Austria* (Josef Strauss).

Dowland: Flow, my tears (from "Ayres," Book II).

One side, and **Dowland: Shall I sue? and Now cease, my wandering eyes** (both from "Ayres," Book II). Aksel Schiott (tenor) accompanied by Jytte Gorki Schmidt (guitar). 1-12" disc (V-12-0924). \$1.31. Also available on 45 rpm discs (V-49-0406). \$1.

Aksel Schiott, the celebrated Danish lieder singer turns his attention this month to three simple little songs by the English composer, John Dowland (1563-1626). Mr. Schiott sings them in perfect English without a sign of an accent. For those who are interested in 16th century music of England, these ballads are indeed lovely to listen to. They have been splendidly recorded.

Malotte: Sing a Song of Sixpence. One side, and

Nevin: Little Boy Blue. Christopher Lynch (tenor) with piano accompaniments by Eugene Bossart. 1-10" disc (C-4552-M). 89¢. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-159). 95¢.

Two little songs that should appeal to children of all ages and grown-ups too—nicely sung by the popular Irish tenor, Christopher Lynch.

Barber: Sleep, Now. One side, and **Hageman: At**

The Well. Marilyn Cotlow (soprano) with piano accompaniments by Claire Stafford. 1-10" disc (V-10-1467). \$1.05.

The youthful Marilyn Cotlow of the Metropolitan makes her bow on RCA Victor records this month. She has selected two interesting songs by present-day composers and she sings them very well. Neither are the sort of pieces that will have a general appeal and so this disc will not likely enjoy a wide sale. Perhaps

Miss Cotlow will give us something from her operatic repertoire on her next disc.

CHORAL



Schönberg: Gurre-Lieder. Paul Althouse, Robert Betts (tenors); Jeanette Vreeland (soprano); Rose Bampton (contralto); Abrasha Robofsky (bass); Princeton, Fortnightly, and Mendelssohn Glee Clubs; and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 14-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-127. \$18.50.

At long last comes the much talked about re-issue of the famous *Gurre-Lieder*, issued in June 1932 originally. It is interesting to note that at the time of first issue, this set sold for \$28.

Although reviewers at the time praised the surfaces, they are poor by today's standards. This is definitely not music for the uninitiated—yet not typically Schönberg, either. It is good to see this old set reinstated in Victor's catalog; however, we cannot see how it can be a commercial success, and we therefore suggest to our interested readers that they go to their dealers without delay to secure their copies.

Traditional Songs of Worship. (Sung in Polish).

Paderewski Polish Choral Society conducted by Dr. Wladyslaw Grigaitis. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set F-7. \$2.68.

This album will have a special appeal for those persons of Polish origin; however, because of the fine quality of this mixed choir, the distinguished direction of its eminent conductor, and the unusual selections, it may be of interest to those who would like some unique choral recordings. The selections are those that will be known and appreciated by Polish Christians—they are of a sacred nature and most of them are particularly appropriate for Easter.

PIANO



Bach—trans. Busoni: Sonata No. 4 in D minor for Unaccompanied Violin—Chaconne. Egon Petri (piano). 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-313. \$2.68.

Last month Columbia issued a single record by Egon Petri and this month this little album set. Is it possible that Petri has come out of retirement and made some new recordings or are these some that were made several years ago, and Columbia is just getting around to release them? In any case this fine performance of Busoni's arrangement for piano of the Chaconne from Bach's "Sonata No. 4 in D minor for Unaccompanied Violin" is worthy of being released at any time. It is more or less connoisseur's music but we rather believe that there are enough discerning record collectors to make this release commercially worthwhile.

Some ten or twelve years ago Ernst Victor Wolff made a recording of this work for Columbia (Col.

Set MX-91) but we haven't seen a copy of it for a long while—guess the present album will take its place in the Columbia catalog.

Ravel: Jeux d'eau. One side, and **Fauré: Impromptu No. 2, in F minor, Op. 31.** Alexander Brailowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0794). \$1.31.

Brailowsky from time to time selects pieces for recording that are not too well known but which have real artistic merit; perhaps they are selections that he particularly likes and knows that he plays well. It would seem so because he seldom makes a record that does not enjoy reasonable popularity with those music lovers who specialize in piano recordings. The present disc is no exception, and we thus recommend it.

Moussorgsky—arr. Whittemore and Lowe: Boris Goudounoff—Coronation Scene. One side, and **Shostakovich: The Age of Gold—Polka.** Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (V-12-0923). \$1.31. Also available on 45 rpm discs (V-49-0405). \$1.

Nothing is too much for duo-pianists it would seem—just listen to the "Coronation Scene" on this disc. Whether you like it or not, it is a mighty clever arrangement, and it is said that Whittemore and Lowe's audiences go for it in a big way. We rather believe that record fans who go in for two-piano recordings will think that it is pretty swell. Superb reproduction is an added feature.

Wagner: Die Walküre—Magic Fire Music (Act III). One side, and **Mozart: Rondo No. 7 in D major, K. 250 ("Haffner").** First Piano Quartet. 1-12" disc (V-12-0766). \$1.31.

The First Piano Quartet fans will probably think this is great stuff and it really is if such things as the Magic Fire Music played on four pianos appeals to you. It's spectacular to say the least. As for Mozart's lovely Rondo, we would prefer it in its popular arrangement for violin and piano; but then we guess we are a bit old-fashioned.

DICTION



You Are There: The Signing of the Magna Charta. Produced and directed by Robert Lewis Shayon, with CBS correspondents John Daly, Ken Roberts, Don Hollenbeck and Quincy Howe. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-822. \$4.15.

You Are There: The Battle of Gettysburg. Produced and directed by Robert Lewis Shayon, with CBS correspondents Don Hollenbeck, Richard C. Hottelet, John Daly, Ken Roberts and Ned Calmer. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-823. \$4.15.

(Both above sets available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4149). \$4.85.

With these two unique sets of records a new and

exciting method of teaching history has been devised. Certainly those who have heard them will never forget what was accomplished on the meadow at Runnymede—the great step that was taken there toward freedom for men everywhere—nor will they forget the importance of the battle at Gettysburg—the decisive conflict that decided the preservation of the Union in the dreadful war between the states.

The method used is a simple one. The wonder is that someone did not think of it before.

A script is prepared and acted out by capable players with CBS correspondents located at various important points. These correspondents describe what is happening and interview various persons about them just as they do when any important event is being broadcast. In other words, if radio broadcasting had been in existence when the Magna Charta was signed by King John, and when the Battle of Gettysburg was fought, those listening would have heard just about what one now hears on these remarkable discs.

Each of these recordings has the very breath of life—a bit of humor now and then—and in listening to them, one cannot help feeling that he has been an onlooker at two of the greatest events in all history. Congratulations Columbia for a fine idea most successfully brought to fruition. We hope that you will cover other great events in history in the same superb way.

R.

VIOLIN



Sarasate: Habanera (from "Spanish Dances, Op. 21"). One side, and **Wieniawsky: Scherzo Tarantelle, Op. 16.** Yehudi Menuhin (violin) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0922). \$1.31. Also available on 45 rpm discs (V-49-0404). \$1.

Two typical violin virtuoso selections played as one would expect them to be by the great Menuhin—brilliant fiddling and grand reproduction.

MISCELLANEOUS



Walton: Façade. Edith Sitwell and David Horner (speaking) with chamber orchestra conducted by Frederick Prausnitz. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-829. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2047). \$3.85.

An unusual literary and musical achievement, the recording of Edith Sitwell's "Façade" with music by the British composer William Walton, is issued by Columbia in cooperation with the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Dr. Sitwell recites 19 of the 20 poems in the recording, and the last, the *Tango Pasodoble* is recited by David Horner. Walton's musical score is played by an instrumental ensemble of players from the Juilliard School, directed by Frederick Prausnitz.

Written 25 years ago, "Façade" is one of the earliest attempts to express in literature and music

the art then being introduced by abstractionist painters and sculptors. It was first performed in London in 1922, and proved a highly controversial offering. Since that time it has won greater popularity, and a performance of the work recently at the Museum of Modern Art in New York was completely sold out and received with great acclaim. The poems, according to their author, are abstract patterns which tell no story and point no moral—a matter of moods and rhythms brought out by the accompanying music.

Dr. Sitwell's verse is a remarkable study in rhythm, sound and imagery. Walton's music, written when the composer was only nineteen, matches Dr. Sitwell's verse in color and in humor. The poems, half sung, half read, are rendered by Dr. Sitwell, according to one critic, "with the skill of a trained singer and the intelligent expressiveness of a magnificent poet."

A most artistically illustrated booklet containing the text of these poems is supplied with this unusual album. Here is an unique combination of poetry and music superbly presented in recorded form.

Herbert: Star Light, Star Bright. One side, and **Herbert: Fairy Tales.** Played on a Music Box. 1-10" disc (Bornand S-1). \$1.15.

Brahms: Cradle Song. One side, and **Williams: Rockabye Baby.** Played on a Music Box. 1-10" disc (Bornand S-2). \$1.15.

Gounod: Sing, Smile, Slumber. One side, and **Barnby: Sweet and Low.** Played on a Music Box. 1-10" disc (Bornand S-3). \$1.15.

We remember well the old music box our grandfather had and what fun we used to have playing the big, cumbersome rolls. The phonograph has obsoleted the music box as the automobile has the horse and buggy; yet many persons enjoy riding in a horse and buggy, and perhaps many persons might like to hear what a music box sounded like. While designed primarily for children, these discs will bring back fond memories to most anyone, we feel. They have been well recorded on smooth unbreakable plastic.



ORGAN

Sweelinck: Fantasia No. 10 (in echo style). One side, and **Frescobaldi: Toccata sopra i Pedali.** Finn Videro (organ). 1-12" disc (V-DB-5214). \$2.63.

Here is as charming an organ record as one will find in many a long day. It contains two unostentatious melodies beautifully played on the Compenius Organ, Frederiksborg Castle, Denmark, by Finn Videro. As the reproduction has been faithfully accomplished, this is a disc that can be recommended without reservation.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargal, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicalraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schrimer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technichord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Record Book (International Edition). By David Hall. xii + 1394 pp. Oliver Durrell, Inc. (New York). Price \$7.50.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 5

JULY, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

Now we have a new edition of this famous book which was first published by the Victor Talking Machine Company in 1912. The present edition was completely revised and brought up to date, with the addition of many operas previously omitted, by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar, whose noteworthy book *The Concert Companion* appeared in 1947.

These gentlemen, who are music critics on the New York World-Telegram, are well qualified for their task and we feel sure this new edition of the old favorite will meet with the approbation of all lovers of opera. With the ever increasing interest in this form of musical entertainment it would seem that this book has a ready market awaiting it.

Following a brief outline of the history of opera in Europe and the United States, practically all of the operas in the present repertory and many others that are given only occasionally are considered. Pertinent facts about the *première*, the first performance in this country, the artists who originated the roles and other interesting facts are given with a detailed story of the plot and a description of the various scenes. Hundreds of fine illustrations are provided showing stage settings and portraits of singers in costume who have made outstanding successes in the various roles during the last forty years. The more important RCA Victor recordings are listed with each opera.

If you would like to refresh your memory before attending an operatic performance or listening to an operatic broadcast, this fascinating book will be most helpful.

English Columbia and English "His Master's Voice" have recently announced their new 1949 catalogs. Collectors of imported discs will doubtless be interested in this announcement. The publishers of this bulletin have secured a limited number of each of the above catalogs, and will send a copy to any reader requesting one for 50¢ each (postpaid in U. S. A.).

Also of interest to record collectors is the announcement of a new complete Columbia LP catalog, containing all releases on this new type of record through August 1949. If your local dealer cannot supply you, a 5¢ stamp sent to the publishers of this bulletin will bring you a copy promptly.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Ravel: *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* (complete opera). Soloists and l'Orchestre National and Choir of La Radiodiffusion Française—Bour. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4153). \$4.85.

Beethoven: *Septet in E-flat, Op. 20.* Pro Musica Chamber Group. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6460). \$5.95.

Vivaldi: *Gloria Mass.* Zanolli (soprano), Girodano (mezzo-soprano) with Orchestra and Chorus—Pedrollo and Camillucci. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6610). \$5.95.

Beethoven: *Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120.* Three sides, and Beethoven: *Variations in F major, Op. 34.* Leonard Shure (piano), 2-12" discs in folder (automatic sequence) (VX-VLP-6360). \$9.70

Beethoven: *Concerto in E-flat major* (1784). Frugoni (piano) and Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra—Paray. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6470). \$5.95.

Mozart: *Concerto No. 15 in B-flat major*, K. 450. Ando Foldes (piano) with Lamoureux Orchestra—Bigot. 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6580). \$4.85.

Saint-Saëns: *Concerto No. 3 in B minor*, Op. 61. One and one-half sides, and Ravel: *Tzigane*. Ruggero Ricci (violin) with Lamoureux Orchestra—Bigot. 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6240). \$4.85.

Bach: *Italian Concerto in F major*. One side, and Bach: *Concerto No. 3 in D minor* (after Marcello). Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (AL-LA-5). \$3.85.

Renaissance Music for the Lute. Suzanne Bloch (lute). 1-10" disc (AL-LA-6). \$3.85.

The Legend of John Henry. Edgar Clark (folk singer). 1-10" disc (AL-LA-8). \$3.85.

Keyboard Music of the Baroque Period. Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (AL-LA-3). \$4.85.

A Centenary Concert of Chopin. Mikhail Sheyne (piano). 1-12" disc (AL-LA-7). \$4.85.

Haydn: *Trio No. 1 in G major*. One side, and Beethoven: *Trio in E-flat major*, Op. 70, No. 2. Alma Trio. 1-12" disc (AL-LA-4). \$4.85.

ORCHESTRA

Vivaldi—arr. Molinari: *Concerto Grosso in G minor*, Op. 3, No. 2. Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Antonio Guarnieri. 2-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EBL-8005. \$3.94.

The series of twelve grand concertos, which Vivaldi collectively titled "L'estro armonico" (Opus 3) are something that would make a worthy project for some recording company—to record in their entirety. They are magnificent music in every sense. They are in Concerto Grosso form, several solo instruments forming the Concertino and the full ensemble the Concerto Grosso. Vivaldi, being a fine virtuoso fiddler in his day, wrote especially gracious music for strings. His violin writing was then something new and greater than that which preceded him for it gave the instrument a chance to sing. It remains today very beautiful writing for that instrument.

The present work is in four movements (as is the famous D minor; the other ten are in three movements). They are: *Adagio e Spiccato*, *Allegro*, *Larghetto*, and *Allegro*. The opening movement is slow, each note separate and distinct, produced by letting the bow fall upon the strings with a light, spring-like motion of the wrist. It is most impressive, with lovely tonal beauty. The next movement, as well as the clos-

ing movement, moves along briskly and with infectious rhythm. The *Larghetto* is broad and full of dynamic contrasts. Each movement is short, occupying one record side.

This is the first domestic recording of the *G minor*; the only previous recording being a very old continental one, also by Guarnieri, which was never pressed in this country. Tonally it is quite pleasing; the surfaces are fairly good. Guarnieri's direction indicates he is in complete sympathy with the work and has a fine command of the style. S.

Mendelssohn: The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26. Hallé Orchestra conducted by John Barbirolli. 1-12" disc (V-C-3770). \$2.

This is a most brilliant recording with a wide range between the *pp* and the *ff* passages—a fine disc with which to demonstrate a high-fidelity reproducing instrument. Otherwise, we can see no other need for another recording of this Mendelssohn selection—there are several excellent ones presently available.

Debussy: Jeux—Poème Danse. Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1276. \$2.62.

(Two-pocket plain albums available for envelope sets at 65¢ each.)

(This annotation is reprinted from the October 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

Shortly after the Russian Ballet produced Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, Diaghilev requested Debussy to write music for a ballet which the dancer Nijinsky had in mind. It was based on a modern theme, the subject being "a plastic vindication of the man of 1913." The plot has to do with the loss of a tennis ball which a young man and two girls are trying to find. In looking for it they go through a number of childish pranks: play hide and seek, try to catch each other, and finally quarrel and sulk. The climax comes when an unknown hand tosses another ball onto the court. The characters, surprised and alarmed, quickly disappear.

Jeux was first danced in Paris in the spring of 1913. It was not a success and quickly disappeared from the ballet repertory. The music without the dancers was played at the Concerts Colonne about a year later but was greeted with only modest acclaim. Many French critics of the time thought that it was worthy of considerable praise; some thought that it was better than *La Mer*, but the public generally did not care much for it, and since its early performances little has been heard of it.

As we listened to this recording, we could not help thinking of Stravinsky. Did two great minds run in the same channel? Both composers were writing music for the ballet at the same time. Students of

Debussy will welcome these discs for it is the first time that *Jeux* has been recorded; and to our mind it has been very well done by the present fine orchestra under the able direction of Victor de Sabata. For those who acquire records only for enjoyment, we suggest a hearing before purchasing. R.

Reger: Böcklin Suite, Op. 128. German Philharmonic Orchestra of Prague conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8007. \$5.25.

Every so often a composer from the past has a rebirth of popularity, and the musical public wonders why his music has not been performed more frequently. That is what is happening to Reger now, and this album is responsible for many asking just that question. With all the works of lesser stature receiving numerous performances, one does wonder why some masterpieces are so neglected.

One reason in the case of Reger is the peculiar notion that he is pedantic and dry. Considering that he wrote hundreds of compositions in many forms, there is no doubt that some of his stuff is uninteresting; just as any composer who wrote voluminously turned out plenty of chaff with the wheat. So with Reger, there is much of his output that is worth hearing. Certainly *The Böcklin Suite* holds much of interest.

Arnold Böcklin was a very popular painter of his day whose paintings had wide circulation; reproductions appeared on the walls of most homes and picture postcards of his paintings were sold by the millions. Four of his most popular canvasses serve as the subjects for Reger's suite, and are the titles of the four sections into which this program music is divided: "The Fiddling Hermit," "Sport of the Waves," "Island of the Dead," and "Bacchanal."

As an orchestral colorist, Reger was as skilled as he was in his contrapuntal writing, for which he has been well known. *The Böcklin Suite* is wonderfully descriptive. It is easy to take on first hearing, and subsequent hearings bring out emotional depths and subtleties which are all but elusive. The performance is skillful and sympathetic; the reproduction, quite fine. S.

Gould: Spirituals for Orchestra. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Artur Rodzinski. Five sides, and **Gould: Symphony No. 2 ("On Marching Tunes")**—Quickstep. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Morton Gould. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-832. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Copland: A Lincoln Portrait**. Kenneth Spencer (narrator). 1-10" disc (CML-2042). \$3.85.

Artur Rodzinski conducts the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York in Morton Gould's *Spirituals for Orchestra*. Based on spirituals which are a source of a large part of U. S. folk material, both negro and white, this orchestral suite offers

five widely contrasting moods.

These are aptly described in the titles of the suite's five parts: *Proclamation*; *Sermon*; *A Little Bit of Sin*; *Protest*; and *Jubilee*.

The orchestration utilizes the strings as a choir, set with and against the rest of the orchestra. This is analogous to a vocal choir singing antiphonally. Composed in 1941, "Spirituals" was first performed under Gould's direction the same year at the New York City Festival of American Music. Leading symphony orchestras have offered it throughout the country.

The gay and jaunty *Quickstep* conducted by Gould, is the third movement (corresponding to the "Scherzo") of his *Symphony On Marching Tunes*. Chronologically, this is his second symphony. Throughout it, he uses the idioms of American marching tunes and ballads, mostly of the Civil War era.

Respighi: The Pines of Rome. Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1309. \$2.62.

(Two-pocket plain albums available for envelope sets at 65¢ each.)

Until three years ago, when Columbia released the Philadelphia Orchestra version, there had never been a satisfactory recording of Respighi's *The Pines of Rome*. That fine album has enjoyed a large and continued sale and we do not believe that the present Victor set by Goossens and the Cincinnati Symphony will interfere with its great popularity. The Cincinnati Symphony is not the Philadelphia Orchestra and that fact shows up particularly in such massive works as the present one. Others may differ but we surely prefer the earlier Columbia recording.

The Pines of Rome is the second of Respighi's three symphonic poems about Rome. It is in four sections, the third of which contains the voice of a nightingale. Respighi wanted the sound of a real nightingale and indicated in the score the use of a phonograph record. The critics at the first performances all had something to talk about because of that "radical" departure from orchestral scoring.

The nightingale notwithstanding, the music today sounds conventional enough. It is scored for a large orchestra, and much of it is opulent fare; but as a whole it is well balanced with many lovely lyrical passages. Nearly all of the newer record collectors who are beginning to look beyond Beethoven and Tchaikovsky symphonies will find this work congenial and wholly enjoyable. We suggest they do not get discouraged with the first record side, for the opening measures are a bit awkward and hard—the suite soon settles down to very listenable music.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Prelude. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80036). \$1.32.

Of the more than a dozen recordings that are available of this popular selection this Mengelberg version

rates with the first three or four. Personally we would prefer either the Stokowski-Philadelphia Orchestra or the Toscanini-NBC Symphony to the present performance by Mengelberg. However, Capitol is making it generally available in this country and so those interested may easily hear it.

Strauss: Waltzes. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-315. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Strauss Overtures**. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2041). \$3.85.

We should think that everyone who would be interested in a recording of either the *Blue Danube Waltz* or *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (the two selections contained in this album) would have purchased a copy long ago. However, strange as it may seem it is not at all unlikely that this album will be one of the largest sellers of the current month.

Ormandy is excellent in music of this character and so if you would like a copy of these most popular Strauss selections, you will find the present album contains as fine recordings as are available.

Respighi: Arie di Corte (from "Suite No. 3"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-12973D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-190). 95¢

This is a charming record and one that should have a wide appeal. The selection is from Respighi's suite entitled "Ancient Airs and Dances for the Lute" and is based on a melody of Jean-Baptiste Besard (1565-1625) a noted French amateur composer and lutenist. Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra give an excellent performance and Columbia has supplied splendid reproduction.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E flat, Op. 73. ("The Emperor"). Artur Schnabel (piano) with The Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 5-12" discs in album (V-DB-9326 to V-DB-9330). \$13.13.

Rarely are the connoisseurs ever satisfied with a recording of the great *Emperor Concerto*. Schnabel made one a few years ago with Stock and the Chicago Orchestra (Vic. DM-939). It seems he, or someone, didn't think it was perfect, so he tried it again in England with Galliera and the Philharmonia. The results are good, but hardly perfection. Galliera gives us a muscular reading of the orchestral score which is impressive for a few minutes and then begins to be too much of a good thing. He is not the man, nor is his orchestra the instrument to squeeze out this type of music at such consistent high voltage. It takes Szell, Reiner, or Toscanini to do it, and even they do not always succeed. For the most part, however, the orchestral part is impressive, and it may

be that most persons will not notice the coarse edges that annoyed us on the blistering hot day we were listening to it.

As for Schnabel, the stamp of greatness and authority is unmistakably imprinted on his performance from the opening measures. This very authority tends to rob his conception of warmth at times; but bless him, he does not drive the tempo hard, as so many do when they have a great command of the idiom. His phrasing is broad and roomy, which (artificially) tends to impart warmth.

Now that the fine points have been covered, we will state generally that the impression made by this recording is very fine. It has clarion brilliance, is transparent and of good timbre; and the reading is bold and sturdy. It will probably be considered the best *Emperor* to date. S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 9 in E-flat major, K. 271 ("Jeunehomme"). Gaby Casadesus (piano) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. Seven sides, and **Mozart: Six Variations in F major on an Allegretto**. Gaby Casadesus (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Vox Set 650. \$6.

We always have the feeling that Vox deserves an "A" for effort, and nearly every time an "A" for actual accomplishment too. Certainly this set could stand in the most fastidious Mozart collector's library beside the other piano concerto recordings. There is but one other recording of the K. 271, that of Giesecking (Col. MM-291), a fine set of an earlier era of recording.

Gaby Casadesus (wife of Robert) plays with a proper style and feeling for Mozart that could hardly be bettered. Paul Paray, known for some time as a sensitive musician, provides an admirably adjusted accompaniment. The reproduction is splendid, with a clear treble and true, ringing piano tone (a fine instrument, by the way, was used for this recording—better than some pianos which somehow get in recording studios.) The surfaces of our set yielded no ticks and were unusually smooth.

Lest we forget the music, it is unique in that the customary long orchestral introduction was dispensed with, the piano introducing the theme from the start. It is a beautiful work, obviously written with great inspiration. We can recommend this album very highly. S.

Paganini—trans. Wilhelmj: Concerto in D major, Op. 6. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugène Bigot. Five sides, and **Kreisler: Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6.** Ruggiero Ricci (violin). 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 649. \$4.75.

Ricci's playing has always made us sit up and take notice. In the Paganini *Concerto in D* he is at his exciting best, with a dazzling technical display. The Wilhelmj edition of this work is in reality a truncated version, but a more unified and logical one, so

we are told, than the original. Originally in three movements and excessively long, Wilhelmj reconstructed it in one movement and cleaned up the orchestration. The solo part "is one of satanic difficulty and remains unchallenged as the foremost example of bravura violin playing." Yes, there is plenty of fireworks, but also some singing melody characteristic of Paganini.

The present set has been recently released in France on Polydor records, so we assume this to be a fair example of current French recording technique. It is good, quite brilliant in character, and of good timbre. Vox's shellac surfaces are much better these days; our set was very smooth and quiet. Ricci is easily preferable to others who have recorded this work, including Menuhin, who used the original three movement version.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Quintet in C minor, K. 406. Budapest String Quartet, with Milton Katims (viola). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-830. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Mozart: Quintet in D major, K. 593.** Budapest Quartet with Katims. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4143). \$4.85.

This work originally appeared in 1782 as *Serenade in C minor for Wind Instruments* (K. 388). Five years later Mozart arranged it for string quintet, in which form it appears on these discs. The Budapest players are unquestionably one the finest chamber music groups of our time and the performance that they present of this lovely Mozart work calls for the highest praise.

We do not recall that this quintet has ever been recorded before. Thus, Mozart collectors have an opportunity of adding a fine new item to their libraries.

Mendelssohn: Octet in E-flat major, Op. 20. Pro Musica Chamber Group. 3-12" discs in album. Vox Set 651. \$7.

With the composition of the *Quintet in A*, the *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture* and the *Octet*, Mendelssohn was launched upon the world, at the age of seventeen, as a thoroughly original composer. Very little of his excellent chamber music has been recorded. Mendelssohn's great works in this field are on a par with those for the orchestra although the accusation has sometimes been made that they are more fitted for the orchestra than the chamber. (The *Scherzo* from the present Octet has been arranged for orchestra and two fine recordings have been made of it—one by the Boston "Pops" and the other by the Minneapolis Symphony.) To some extent this charge is well-founded. Mendelssohn virtually anticipated it in his preface to the *Octet*, which he desires to be played in symphonic style. The eight-part writing is admirable. The recording of this work should be welcomed heartily by all Mendelssohnians, for the

reproduction is satisfactory and the performance particularly fine.

Bach—trans. Oubradous: Prelude and Fugue No. 48 in B minor. M. Morel (oboe), P. Lefebvre (clarinet), and Fernand Oubradous (bassoon). 1-10" disc (OL-8). \$1.60.

The distinguished French bassoonist, Fernand Oubradous, has transcribed this bit of Bach for a trio of woodwinds. It is entirely delightful and this disc is recommended to all lovers of unusual chamber music. This is another in the fine list of recordings made available by Editions de L'Oiseau-Lyre (Paris), many of which have been reviewed in our columns from time to time.

Mozart: Quartet No. 15 in D minor, K. 421. Hungarian String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1299. \$4.75.

This recording received high praise from the critics when it was released in England a little over a year ago. Whether it will be preferred by the music lovers on this side of the Atlantic to the superb version by the Budapest Quartet, which is presently listed in the Columbia catalog, is very much of a question. Both the members of the Hungarian and the Budapest Quartets are artists of high rank in the realm of chamber music but to us the rendition of the Budapest players seems to have more of that warmth that is indicated in this lovely Mozart work.

OPERA



Pergolesi: La Serva Padrona. (Sung in Italian). Maria Erato (soprano) and Aldo Bacci (basso) with Milan Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Arrigo Pedrollo. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6600). \$5.95.

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona* was first performed in Naples in 1733; it is, thus, 216 years old.

This fine performance of Pergolesi's sparkling little opera about the servant girl who becomes mistress of the house should be welcome to all collectors and lovers of the classic opera-bouffe.

La Serva Padrona was written by its 23-year-old composer as a series of interludes to be given during the intermissions of a tragic opera—for that was the custom of the times.

Pergolesi's marvelous little work soon began to stand on its own feet, and was heard all over Europe; it was translated into various languages. It has survived most of its fellows to-day, and revivals are not infrequent. Curiously enough, the Metropolitan *première* did not occur until February 23, 1935, when it was given with Editha Fleischer, Louis D'Angelo and Angelo Bada, 202 years after its first performance. The Metropolitan revived it on December 9, 1942, with Bidú Sayão, Salvatore Baccaloni and Alessio De Paolis in the opera's three roles.

The present performance includes all the principal arias and duets, with stretches of recitative accompanied by orchestra. Maria Erato is the scheming Serpina, while Aldo Bacci sings the music of Uberto. Both singers, unknown in this country, are fine stylists, particularly the soprano, who sings her Pergolesi like a lark.

The Milan Philharmonic is present under Arrigo Pedrollo, and the dubbing from Polydor discs onto one long-playing record is an altogether satisfactory job. Naturally, the opera gains tremendously when presented in this more or less uninterrupted manner. This is a *must* for all lovers of 18th Century music.

The attention of the reader is directed once again to the heading, wherein is stated that this work is available at present only on LP Microgroove (33½ rpm). If and when a 78 rpm version is released, it will be announced in these pages. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Weber: Der Freischütz—Einst träumte meiner sel'gen Base; Trübe Augen, Liebchen, taugen (Act III). (Sung in German.) Erna Sack (soprano) with German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-10" disc (CL-77-80035). \$1.05.

Erna Sack fans will doubtless be delighted to know that this splendid recording from Weber's *Der Freischütz* is now available in this country. Capitol has re-pressed it from German Telefunken masters.

Puccini: La Bohème—Si, mi chiamano Mimi (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: Madama Butterfly**—Un bel di, vedremo (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Hjördis Schymberg (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevillius. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6703). \$2.63.

Here is an opportunity to hear an artist who appears with great success in the Scandinavian opera houses. Miss Schymberg has an excellent voice and she sings these arias with a fine sense of the dramatic, but she lacks the warmth that we associate with music of this character.

CHORAL



Latin American Songs. de Paur's Infantry Chorus conducted by Leonard de Paur. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-831. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **A Choral Concert.** de Paur's Infantry Chorus. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4144). \$4.85.

Here are unusual recordings by that splendid aggregation of singers, the dePaur Infantry Chorus.

These Latin American songs, which include Barbadian, Calypso, Trinidad, Brazilian, Argentine, Mexican and Afro-Brazilian numbers, create a distinctive and telling atmosphere. The mood varies considerably: some of these songs are of joy, others of mourning.

Whatever the mood, the superbly trained de Paur Chorus is equal to the occasion. The group's wonderful quasi-instrumental effects, its attention to exciting dynamics, its excellent diction are all clearly and realistically caught on these smooth surfaces.

For anyone who likes first-rate choral singing, and searches for material which is not in every day usage, this well recorded album of discs should prove a joy.

D.

Bach: Jesu, joy of man's desiring (from "Cantata No. 147"). One side, **Handel: Haste Thee Nymph.** Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Robertson. 1-10" disc (V-B-9697). \$1.42.

The Glasgow Orpheus Choir continues to gain in popularity with American listeners and we presume that many of them will be delighted with the choral version of Bach's ever-popular *Jesus, joy of man's desiring*—words by H. P. Allen. However, we do not feel that the present disc is up to the high standard set by earlier ones. If you are thinking of buying your first Orpheus Choir recording we suggest that you make your choice from the many that have been previously reviewed in this publication.

Hymns of Judea. Cantor Louis Blumenthal with choir conducted by David Levine, featuring Allan Brown (organ). 4-10" discs in album. London Set LA-61. \$4.99.

We don't know when we have heard any recordings of Jewish sacred selections that we believe will appeal to persons of all faiths as will the ones in this fine album. Cantor Blumenthal has a most pleasing voice that blends splendidly with the fine male choir that joins him in the singing of these pieces.

The selections in this album are: *Lecho Dodee; El Moleh Rachamin; Kiddush; Hinnene; Kaddish; Kol Nidrei; and Kodosh Atoh.*

VOCAL



My Encores. Bidú Sayão (soprano) accompanied by Milne Charnley (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-833. \$4.46. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Folk Songs of Brazil.** Bidú Sayão (soprano). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4154). \$4.85.

Here is a charming and relaxing little album of assorted songs by Bidú Sayão. In an age not notable for fine-spun vocal art and correct emission, Mme. Sayão stands out with real distinction. Besides being one of the Metropolitan's bright, particular ornaments, she is also a recitalist of no mean order.

This collection assembles nine songs which the petite Brazilian soprano is apt to use as encores. Versatility is the keynote, rather than profundity, for here are songs by American, English, French, Spanish, and South American composers.

Charming indeed, and welcome, is Koehlein's *Si tu le veux*, last recorded domestically by Emma Eames 41 years ago. Ernest Moret's *Le Nelumbo* is also an intimate number—exotic, grateful to the vocalist, and a vehicle for her ravishing pianissimo effects.

Joaquin Nin's *Polo*, *Obradors Dos Cantares*, and Sandoval's interesting *Esclaves* remind one that the singer is a Latin American and handles such music with unimpeachable authority.

The Bird is an effective and little known song by the English composer, John Duke; while *C'est mon ami* is the familiar arrangement of an old French song by Bainbridge Crist.

Mme. Sayão does well with *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*, and she deals musically with the banalities of Alicia Ann Scott's *Think on Me*. This is probably the most intimate glimpse of this singer record enthusiasts have yet had, and it is a glimpse of a woman who is a vocal artist in the true sense of the word.

Milne Charnley supplies expert accompaniment and the recording is clear and honest.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Villa-Lobos: A Viola. One side, and **Villa-Lobos: Cantilena No. 3.** (Sung in Portuguese). Frederick Fuller (baritone) accompanied by Hector Villa-Lobos (piano). 1-10" disc (V-B-9700). \$1.42.

Here is a charming and certainly a most unusual little disc. It contains two songs from the Brazilian composer Hector Villa-Lobos' immense output; it is said that he has written so much that many of his compositions he has entirely forgotten himself. The label states that the *Cantilena* is based on a traditional Negro melody; if that is correct, the Negroes of Brazil have little in common musically with their North American brothers, for this piece sounds to us very much like a Hebrew chant. *A Viola* is a delightful little song in Brazilian rhythm, which to a slight extent shows the French influence of the period of years that the composer spent in Paris.

Frederick Fuller, a new name to us, is a thoroughly intelligent musician and we presume that the composer selected him for these recordings; at least Villa-Lobos approves of him as an interpreter, for we find the composer's name on these recordings as the accompanist.

Minstrel Songs of Germany. (Sung in English). Richard Dyer-Bennet (tenor) accompanying himself on the guitar. 4-10" discs in album. Vox Set 631. \$3.93.

Several years ago, Richard Dyer-Bennet paid a visit to the famous Swedish minstrel, Sven Scholander, who for many years had traveled throughout Europe learning and singing folk songs of the various countries. From Scholander he learned many songs, among them the German ones contained in this album. Mr. Dyer-Bennet translated these into English and thus presents them on these discs. For those interested in music of this

character, this album is highly recommended.

Carrolli: Core 'ngrato. One side, and **Falvo: Dic-tencello Vuje.** Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Rainaldo Zamboni. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6436). \$2.63.

This new record by Gigli, which just arrived from England, ably demonstrates that this great artist is still tops in his field. His beautiful *legato* and the warmth of his interpretation are gloriously evident in his renditions of these two lovely Neapolitan songs. He is nicely supported by an adequate orchestra, and the reproduction is of the best.

Date with Jane Powell. Jane Powell (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Carmen Dragon. 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-835. \$3.57. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2045). \$3.85.

This album is designed especially for Jane Powell fans—others may find different recordings of these popular selections that will please them better. If you are an ardent admirer of Miss Powell these discs are for you; if you are not, you had better hear them before you buy.

The selections in this album are: *The Donkey Sere-nade*; *Mighty Lak' a Rose*; *Over the Rainbow*; *Sum-ertime*; *One Kiss*; and *Sweethearts*. The LP disc contains in addition to the six selections just listed: Schubert's *Ave Maria* and Delibes' *Les Filles de Cadiz*.

Shannon: The Missouri Waltz. One side, and **Mac-Donald: Beautiful Ohio.** Helen Traubel (soprano) with male chorus and orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-10" disc (C-17584D). 89¢. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-178). 95¢.

We don't know why Miss Traubel wastes her time with trifles of this kind—perhaps they will have a wide appeal in the corn belt but we doubt it. If Columbia could have had President Truman supply piano accompaniments instead of Mr. O'Connell's orchestra that might have helped the sale.

PIANO



Dances Not for Dancing. First Piano Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1310. \$4.75.

Recordings by The First Piano Quartet are becoming more and more popular and each new album by this unique musical organization seems to enjoy a greater sale than the previous ones. The present album should not be an exception to this rule for it contains many attractive selections. They are: *Invita-tion to the Dance* (Weber); *Dance of the Toy Pipes* (Tchaikovsky); *Russian Sailors' Dance* (Glière);

Polka (Smetana); *Minuet* (Boccherini); *Brazileira* (Milhaud); *Hornpipe* (Handel); *Minute Waltz* (Chopin); *Gavotte* (Gluck); and *La Danza* (Rossini-Liszt).

Liszt: Les Jeux d'eaux a la Villa d'Este. Jose Iturbi (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0921). \$1.31.

Iturbi gives a thrilling performance of this spectacular selection from Liszt's "Annees de Pelerinage" (Years of Pilgrimage). One needs have but a little imagination to visualize the sparkling fountains playing in the bright sunlight. Iturbi makes the most of a great opportunity to display his musical brilliance with a recording that is very likely to enjoy immense sales throughout the country.

Mendelssohn: Capriccio Brillant, Op. 22. Moura Lympamy (piano) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (D-K-1191). \$2.10.

In 1941, Columbia released a recording of this work by Joanna Graudan with the Minneapolis Symphony under Mitropoulos; it has enjoyed only a modest sale, although in our opinion it was a highly satisfactory version. The brilliant, and much talked of pianist, Moura Lympamy may add enough glamor to the present disc to insure for it greater popularity than the earlier recording. However, the *Capriccio Brillant* does not rank with Mendelssohn's more familiar masterpieces, either in appealing charm or in originality; thus, if this recording of it enjoys a wide sale, the credit must be given to the soloist.

VIOLIN



Falla—trans. Kochanski: *Suite Populaire Espagnole*. Three sides, and **Sarasate: Caprice Basque, Op. 24**. Isaac Stern (violin) accompanied by Alexander Zakin (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-314. \$3.10. Also available on LP Micro-groove, coupled with **Hindemith: Sonata (1940)**. Stern and Zakin. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2050). \$3.85.

Paul Kochanski has arranged six of Falla's "Seven Popular Spanish Songs" for violin and piano, and the brilliant violinist, Isaac Stern, with the aid of his accompanist, Alexander Zakin, has made splendid recordings of them for this unusual album.

Kochanski calls his arrangements *Suite Populaire Espagnole*. It is made up of the following: *El Pano Moruno* (Moorish dance); *Nana* (a lullaby); *Cancion* (a bright song); *Asturiana* (the romantic spirit of Spain); *Polo* (a Gypsy dance); and *Jota* (popular Spanish dance).

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Muslcraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Charles Delaunay's New Hot Discography. Edited by Walter E. Schaap and George Avakian. xviii + 608 pp. Criterion Music Corporation (New York). Price \$6.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Music to My Ears. By Deems Taylor. xvi + 288 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 6

AUGUST, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

Just a year ago LP (Long Playing) Micro-groove records were placed on the market by Columbia. It was a radical step in the recording art and was greeted by much skepticism on the part of the record buying public and the dealers. Since that time Columbia has licensed a number of manufacturers to make this type of record. Among them are Decca; Vox; Capitol; Concert Hall; Cetra; London; Mercury; and several other small independent companies. Thus the public and the dealers have had ample opportunity to test this new method of recording and to come to some pretty definite conclusions.

We think that it is fair to state that LP records have been very generally acclaimed and that they have attained a firm place in the record making art. At a meeting of the National Association of Music Merchants, with dealers from all parts of the United States in attendance, held in New York last month, a vote was taken on the subject and the vast majority of the dealers present signified that they were terrifically enthusiastic about LP records. They reported that their sales on this new item were steadily increasing and that record collectors, almost unanimously, were well pleased with them.

We pass this information on to our readers, so that those whose instruments are not equipped to play LP records may give the matter some thought. It would seem to us that the method of LP recording is now firmly and definitely established and that classical record buyers whose phonographs are not equipped to play LP discs are missing a great deal.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most issues

published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Schumann: *Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63.*
Trio de Trieste. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-2030),
\$5.95.

Mendelssohn: *Octet in E flat major, Op. 20.*
Pro Musica Chamber Group. 1-12" disc
(VX-PLP-6510). \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: *Trio in A minor, Op. 50.* Louis
Kaufman (violin), Kurt Reher (violoncello), Theodore Sidenberg (piano). 1-12" disc
(VX-VLP-6530). \$4.85.

Bach: *Arias* (Vol. I). Bach Aria Group—
Scheide. 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6370). \$4.85.

ORCHESTRA



Vaughan Williams: *Symphony No. 6 in E minor.*
Seven sides, and Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on "Greensleeves."* Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-838. \$5.20.

The general consensus concerning Vaughan Williams' latest symphony is that it is his greatest, and further, that it will stand as one of the great symphonic masterpieces of the first half of the Twentieth Century. We would not care to argue the point, for it is certainly a magnificent creation, which deserves all the encomiums it can reap. It was written during the dark days of the Second World War; its first three movements dealing with the tragedy and drama of those years. The final movement, titled *Epilogue*, meditates with great philosophical breadth on some Utopia.

Leopold Stokowski is quoted at length in the notes which accompany this album. He stresses the perfect

balance between form and content which this work enjoys; it expresses intense and deep feeling, yet is perfect in form. He states that in this symphony the world of music has a tonal picture of today, expressing the turmoil, the dark despair, the aspiration of an ideal future; also that every listener will find his own meaning in the unique finale—one of the most profound expressions in all music.

That Stokowski sincerely believes in this work is evident throughout the recording. It is eloquent, communicative, and masterful in every respect. The reproduction is full and rich, with good resonance and perspective. In every way, this is a first class job. Stokowski's reading of *Greensleeves* is broad and luscious—it is a lovely piece of music. Don't pass up an opportunity to hear this great album; it will prove highly rewarding.

S.

Hindemith: Nobilissima Visione (Concert Suite from the Ballet "St. Francis"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Five sides, and **Hanson: Serenade for Flute and Strings**. William Kincaid (flute) and Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-841. \$4.15.

In this superb recording by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the sympathetic and able direction of Dr. Ormandy, we have an item of unusual importance—one that all discerning music lovers will wish to investigate.

This noble work was derived by the composer from his ballet *Nobilissima Visione* (re-named *St. Francis* when it was presented in the United States). The ballet dates from 1937 and was composed for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo with choreography by Léonide Massine. It was first produced by that famous troupe in London in 1938.

The Concert Suite is in three movements: 1). *Introduction and Rondo*; 2). *March and Pastorale*; 3). *Passacaglia*. Hindemith states that the Suite consists "of those sections of the ballet score which are self-sufficient and comprehensible as concert music and which do not depend, therefore, on supplementary stage action."

The composer has identified these various sections in the following note:

"The introduction consists of that part of the original music during which the hero of the action (St. Francis) is sunk in meditation. The Rondo corresponds to the music in the stage score for the mystic union of the Saint to Mistress Poverty, the scene having been inspired by an old Tuscan legend. The music reflects the blessed peace and unworldly cheer with which the guests at the wedding participate in the wedding feast—dry bread and water only. The second movement pictures the march of a troop of medieval soldiers. First heard but distantly, their gradual approach is observed. The middle portion of this movement suggests the brutality with which these mercenaries set upon a traveling burgher and rob him. The third and closing movement, *Passacaglia*,

corresponds to the portion of the ballet score representing the *Hymn to the Sun*. Here all the symbolic personifications of heavenly and earthly existence mingle in the course of the different variations through which the six-measure-long theme of the *Passacaglia* is transformed. In the ballet this closing piece bears a special title borrowed from a chapter heading in an old version of the *Cantique du Soleil*, which reads 'Incipit laudes creaturarum'—'Here begin the praises of all creatures.' "

The sixth side of this three-record set contains a lovely little composition for flute and strings by the American composer, Howard Hanson. In it the celebrated solo flutist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, William Kincaid, is featured. Don't miss this charming selection; it is a worthy companion to Hindemith's intriguing suite.

R.

Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D major, K. 385 ("Haffner"). Five sides, and **Rossini: Il Signor Bruschino**—Overture. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-836. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Bach: Suite No. 2 in B minor**. Sebastian Caratelli (flute) and Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4156). \$4.85.

Although written under the pressure of time, the "Haffner" is a great masterpiece. It was composed to help celebrate the granting of a title of nobility to young Sigmund Haffner. Originally it was a kind of serenade containing an introductory march and two minuets. Later, Mozart took out the march and one of the minuets, and it now appears as a symphony, charming in every measure.

The recording history of the "Haffner" in this country has been peculiar, considering the popularity of the work. Toscanini made it with the New York Philharmonic (DM-65) and again with the NBC Orchestra (DM-1172, released January 1948). He drove the first set pretty hard, but with the NBC group he really lashed it, and our review of the work when it was released was quite unfavorable. Sometime in the interim, Beecham made a set with the London Philharmonic (MM-399), and critics and public alike generally considered it a gilt edged effort, as were most of his Mozart recordings. It also enjoyed the best reproduction of the three. Now that Columbia is issuing new versions of its catalog staples, mostly by domestic orchestras, we have Reiner's version of the "Haffner" joining the line-up. Reiner is a highly qualified man to deal with anything as difficult and delicate as this Mozart symphony, and he comes through with flying colors. He has all the form, line, precision, and style required, as well as the resiliency to make this music, instead of an academic exercise. There is not quite the nuance of Beecham (for that matter, who else does have it?); but there is surely more than Toscanini offers. Taken as a whole, we think this is a very fine "Haffner," and the reproduction is good too, wide and roomy,

but clear and Mozartian. Rossini's gay little overture is a worthy encore. In October 1947, we expressed our entire satisfaction with the Bach *Second Suite*, which is the coupling on the LP record. S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 2, Op. 9 ("Antar"). Seven sides, and Brahms—trans. Leinsdorf: **Chorale-Prelude, Op. 122—O God, Thou Holiest.** Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-834. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2044). \$3.85.

A little more than a year ago, May 1948, Monteux and the San Francisco Orchestra issued *Antar* (DM-1203). It was an energetic and enthusiastic reading, abounding in broad colorful strokes. We were, however, not too impressed with the music, despite Monteux's vital performance. Upon hearing the new version by Leinsdorf we are even more baffled with this music, for Leinsdorf's interpretation is as different from Monteux's as night and day. Leinsdorf is more subtle, playing with pastel colors rather than the Frenchman's vivid palette. *Antar* is suddenly calmer and reflective in this version. Which is truer to the spirit of Rimsky's score we do not feel authorized to say; but our impression upon comparing the two is that Monteux gives a better account of the music. Leinsdorf's reproduction is somewhat better. Of his several transcriptions of the Brahms organ chorales, the present one, *O God, Thou Holiest*, is one of the less successful—too flamboyant for the subject matter.

Getting back to *Antar*, the story of this program music may be summed up thusly: *Antar* was an Arabian warrior-poet of the Sixth Century whose eloquence was so revered that one of his verses was hung amongst the idols at the most sacred shrine of the Islamites in Mecca. One day he saved a charming gazelle from death, and the gazelle turned out to be Gul-nazar, Queen of Palmyra. In gratitude she promised him the three great joys of life: The Delights of Vengeance, The Delights of Power, and The Delights of Love, which are also the titles of the final three movements of this suite. At the end of the story, *Antar* dies in the arms of Gul-nazar, as the fire of her love consumes him. S.

Williams: Fantasia on Welsh Nursery Tunes. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Mansel Thomas. Three sides, and **Davies: Minuet and Trio** (from "Suite for Strings"). Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Mansel Thomas. 2-12" discs in album. London Set LA-82. \$5.25.

The Welsh composer, Grace Williams, a former student of Vaughan Williams, has taken several nursery tunes that are well-known in her native country, and with them as a basis, has developed a reasonably interesting symphonic work. It has been nicely recorded by the London Symphony under the direction of Mansel Thomas. We doubt whether the sale of this album in America will be very large. We are

listing it because we believe a few of our readers will be sufficiently interested to listen to it when they make their next call upon their dealers.

The Hubert Davies selection which occupies the fourth side of this pair of discs, while not of prime importance, is quite pleasing to listen to.

Bach: Suite No. 1 in C major. Six sides, and **Bach: Suite No. 4 in D major.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1307. \$7.25.

These recordings were made in the Concerttheatre at Tanglewood, Lenox, Mass., the home of the Berkshire Festival, and were released by RCA Victor in connection with this year's Festival. Koussevitzky has adhered to tradition in reducing his orchestra to one similar in scope to that available in Bach's day. In our opinion he has achieved superb recordings of these two charming suites, and music lovers in general, and admirers of Bach in particular, will surely find this album of real interest.

Both of these suites have been recorded previously by the Busch Chamber Players under the direction of Adolph Busch. Both versions are so worthy that we do not care to make a choice.

R. Strauss: Salome, Op. 54—Salomes Tanz der sieben Schleier. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (Deutsche Grammophon 68126). \$2.63.

Those collectors who are interested in the type of records that are now being manufactured in Germany will doubtless wish to hear this disc. It is the first one we have received from Deutsche Grammophon, the company that used the Polydor label for the records it exported to the United States before World War II.

There are several fine domestic recordings of *Dance of the Seven Veils* from Strauss' *Salome*; thus the interest in the present disc will be largely because of its label. The reproduction rates with the best and the surfaces are as smooth as glass.

The Music of Chopin. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-840. \$5.20.

We presume that Kostelanetz, himself, made these orchestral transcriptions of eight of Chopin's more popular piano pieces. They are pleasing enough for those who might find them interesting. Kostelanetz plays them with his usual fine spirit and they have been nicely recorded by Columbia.

Meyerbeer: Le Prophete—Marche du couronnement ("Coronation March"). One side, and **Chabrier: Marche Joyeuse.** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-10" disc (C-19013D). 89¢. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-201). 95¢.

Here are two marches that are favorites with con-

cert bands and orchestras from coast to coast. They are nicely played by the Minneapolis Symphony with fine spirit and splendidly recorded by Columbia.

Albéniz—trans. **Arbós**: *Iberia, Book II*—Triana. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov**: *The Snow Maiden*—Dance of the Tumblers (Act III). Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0920). \$1.31.

Flotow: *Martha*—Overture. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-0919). \$1.31.

Boston "Pops" records always enjoy a very wide sale and the two listed above should be no exception. They contain the sort of selections that this great orchestra does supremely well.

CONCERTO



Stravinsky: *Concerto for Two Pianos* (1935). Five sides, and **Stravinsky**: *Scherzo à la Russe*. Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-837. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Russian Music for Two Pianos**. Vronsky and Babin. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4157). \$4.85.

A few months ago Vox released a fine recording of this unusual concerto played by Vera Appleton and Michael Field. Despite the fact that it was well performed and adequately reproduced it only met with a very limited response from record buyers. It is not the sort of music that has a wide appeal nor is it music that attracts at first hearing. We were surprised when we saw this selection on Columbia's list for this month. Vronsky and Babin have a large following in this country and their version may enjoy a better response than the earlier Vox recording. If it does it will be because of the popularity of the artists.

This work for two pianos alone was composed in 1935 and was presented in Paris by the composer and his son, Sviatoslav, at a concert given on 21 November of that year. It is truly two-piano music; there is no evidence of a solo piano with a piano accompaniment taking the place of the orchestra as in the usual modern concerto. It was conceived by the composer as an opus for two pianos and that it certainly is.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: *Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4*. Paganini Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1308. \$4.75.

This recording will doubtless be compared with the Budapest Quartet version that was issued by Columbia early in 1945. Those chamber music lovers

who feel that no group can equal the Budapest players will very likely continue to think so after they have heard the Paganini version. However, of those who listen to these two recordings with open minds, it is not at all unlikely that the choice may be very close to 50-50. We have listened carefully to both versions a couple of times, and it would seem to us that any choice would be largely a personal one.

Beethoven: *Serenade in D major, Op. 25*. John Wummer (flute), Alexander Schneider (violin), and Milton Katims (viola). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-839. \$4.15.

This is the first domestic recording of this light-hearted and altogether lovely Beethoven selection. It dates from the composer's early years in Vienna and is typical of the music that was heard in the drawing rooms of the aristocrats of that gay city. Columbia has secured three outstanding artists to make this recording and they have achieved their task with rare distinction. It is indeed hard to imagine a better recorded performance of this fascinating music than we have here.

CHORAL



Vivaldi: *Gloria Mass*. Silvana Zanolli (soprano), Adalgisa Giordano (mezzo-soprano), Chorus of the Choral Academy (Lecco, Italy) directed by Guido Camillucci, and Orchestra of the Teatro Nuovo (Milan) conducted by Arrigo Pedrollo. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6610). \$5.95.

Antonio Vivaldi's (1675-1741) *Gloria Mass* is here presented for the first time on records with this long-playing Polydor-Vox disc. The importance of such an event needs no elaboration.

The *Gloria Mass*, a brilliant and typical composition, is seldom heard. In fact, Vivaldi known today principally as an instrumental composer, suffers from having his marvellous choral achievements sorely neglected.

Vivaldi, to most people, means principally the violin concertos and the concerto grosso for orchestra. However, this does not mean that this classic Italian composer did not write in other forms. He is said to have produced no less than 38 operas, among other things.

The *Gloria Mass* reminds one of the music of Bach and Handel. It is divided into eleven sharply contrasting parts. The divisions are similar to those used by Bach in his stupendous *B Minor Mass*.

Vivaldi's composition gains tremendously by being presented on a long-playing record. The continuity of the work and its sharp contrasts are ever apparent.

An orchestra from Milan and a chorus from Lecco (Lake Como) sound like well-trained, serious organizations. Two soloists, Silvana Zanolli, soprano, and Adalgisa Giordano, mezzo-soprano, suggest compe-

tent mediocrity rather than anything outstanding.

The recording, on the whole, is an excellent job, though more depth and color would have been desirable.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.



OPERA

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Di quella pira (Act III). One side, and **Giordano: Fedora**—Amor ti vieta (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Umberto Berrettoni. 1-10" disc (V-10-1475). \$1.05.

Gigli fans will be pleased to note that RCA Victor has re-pressed these two arias from recordings made abroad several years ago. It is only necessary to state such a disc is available. Those interested in Gigli records will investigate it immediately and those who are not would not be interested no matter how much space we gave it.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Wie nahte mir der Schlummer (Act II). One side, and **Weber: Der Freischütz**—Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle (Act II). (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (Deutsche Grammophon 15081). \$2.63.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Elsa's Traum: Einsam in trüben Tagen (Act I). One side, and **Wagner: Lohengrin**—Euch Lüften die mein Klagen (Act II). (Sung in German). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano) with Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Johannes Schüler. 1-12" disc (Deutsche Grammophon 35081). \$2.63.

Weber: Der Freischütz—Einst träumte meiner sel'gen Base (Act III). One side, and **Weber: Der Freischütz**—Trübe Augen, Liebchen, taugen (Act III). Gilde Güden (soprano) with orchestra, featuring Fritz Steiner (violin). 1-12" disc (Deutsche Grammophon 68066). \$2.63.

These reissues of German Gramophon records should be welcome news to lovers of fine singing, if for nothing else, for the exquisite soprano of Tiana Lemnitz (then at the height of her career) in arias from *Freischütz* and *Lohengrin*.

Probably never has the aria, "Leise, leise" been so beautifully sung as it is here. There have been famous records of this great number by Emmy Destinn, Mme. Gadski, Lotte Lehmann and others of the elect, but none of them can equal the serene and perfectly poised singing with which Mme. Lemnitz adorns Weber's mellifluous strains. The phrasing, the purity of tone and the admirable breath control are features only present in the highest standard of vocal art.

The *Lohengrin* arias are also beautifully presented, the singer achieving, through her voice, the guilelessness and innocence of Elsa von Brabant.

Coupled with these Lemnitz masterpieces is the record of an unfamiliar soprano, Hilde Güden, whose bright voice and neat vocalization make much of the seldom-recorded aria of Annie from *Freischütz*—Einst traumte . . . Miss Güden sounds like a capital soubrette in this engaging music.

These selections are excellently recorded, even though they were undoubtedly made several years ago. They achieve clarity, depth and balance.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.



VOCAL

Mary Martin Sings for You. Mary Martin (vocal) with orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-843. \$4.46.

Mary Martin, who is presently starring in the Broadway smash hit "South Pacific," offers this album of eight top numbers from various musical comedies. The very pleasing and clever arrangements, using an orchestra consisting of: a flute, doubling on clarinet and bass clarinet; a double-bass; guitar; harp; and piano, are by the brilliant young arranger and conductor Ben Ludlow.

The songs that Miss Martin sings in her inimitable style are: *Maybe*; *My Funny Valentine*; *But Not for Me*; *Glad to be Happy*; *I See Your Face Before Me*; *I Want to be With You*; *It's a Lovely Day Tomorrow*; and *A Foggy Day*.

Templeton: Vienna in the Springtime: One side, and **Templeton: Roses in Wintertime**. Eleanor Steber (soprano) accompanied by Alec Templeton (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1473). \$1.05.

Two of the most delightful of Alec Templeton's original compositions are sung by Eleanor Steber with the composer himself at the piano. *Vienna in the Springtime* and *Roses in the Wintertime* draw upon the music of Richard Strauss and Johann Strauss, and familiar melodies are woven into the score by Templeton's agile pianism. This disc should prove popular with Miss Steber's and Mr. Templeton's host of fans.

Strauss Operettas (excerpts). Erna Berger, Elisabeth Friedrich, Anni Frind, Anita Gura (sopranos); Charlotte Müller (contralto); Peter Anders, Friedrich Eugen Engles (tenors); Eugene Fuchs (baritone) with choral and orchestral accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8008. \$5.25.

Capitol has gathered together a number of Telefunken recordings from Johann Strauss' operettas and re-pressed them in this country and offers them in the album listed above. The selections are from: *Die Fledermaus*; *A Night in Venice*; and *Der Zigeunerbaron*. Some of the recordings are quite old and are not up to the quality of reproduction that we expect these days. Those who buy this album will very likely

do so because of the interest that they have in the fine artists who have made these recordings.

Operetta Recital. Helge Roswaenge (tenor) with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-79. \$7.35.

The celebrated Danish tenor, Helge Roswaenge, is known to many record collectors throughout this country, and so this album has an appreciable audience awaiting it. Mr. Roswaenge has chosen six selections from operettas by Lehar and J. Strauss for this collection. Among the operettas represented are: *Schön ist die Welt*; *Giuditta*; *Die lustige Witwe*; *Der Graf von Luxemburg*; and *Der Zigeunerbaron*.

Chaplin: Anniversary Song. One side, and **Romberg: Auf Wiedersehen.** Helen Traubel (soprano) with chorus and orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-10" disc (C-17589D). 89¢. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-302). 95¢.

It may be a novelty to have Miss Traubel of the Metropolitan sing these popular songs from a very old musical comedy and a recent movie but it is certainly no more. Wasting the time of such a fine artist as Miss Traubel on such ditties is one of our pet peeves.

Mozart—arr. La Forge: Variations in C major on "Ah! vous dirai-je, maman," K. 265. Lily Pons (soprano) with the Columbia Concert Orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (C-72754D). \$1.05.

Miss Pons turns this simple little song into a vocal lesson for coloraturas—all of the trills are there and then some. For those interested in vocal technique this disc will be fascinating—others should listen before they buy.

Charles: The Green-Eyed Dragon. One side, and **Strickland: Mah Lindy Lou.** Robert Merrill (baritone) accompanied by Leila Edwards (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1474). \$1.05.

Thousands upon thousands of persons have heard Robert Merrill sing these favorites and doubtless many of them will wish a record of them. Mr. Merrill sings them in fine style and RCA Victor has recorded them splendidly.

Marcel Wittrisch Recital. Marcel Wittrisch (tenor) with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Victor Reinshagen. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-78. \$7.35.

Marcel Wittrisch has quite a following in America which has been developed through the many recordings that he has made in Europe and thus many of our readers will doubtless be glad to know that London has recently released the album listed above. It contains selections from Lehar's *Paganini*; *Die lustige*

Witwe; *Der Zarewitsch*; and *Frasquita*; together with one selection each from Kalman's *Zirkusprinzessin* and Kunnecke's *Der Vetter aus Dingsda*.

Marshall: I Hear You Calling Me. One side, and **Lehar: Yours Is My Heart Alone.** James Melton (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Frank Black. 1-10" disc (V-10-1472). \$1.05.

Two popular selections that should appeal to James Melton fans—beautifully sung and nicely recorded.



PIANO

Brahms: Sonata No. 1 in C major, Op. 1. Ray Lev (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-5). \$4.85.

Once again we have the case of a work numbered "one" not being the first in order of composition by the composer. Brahms had the C major Sonata published first because, as he explained: "When you first show yourself, people should see your forehead, not your foot." The more familiar F sharp minor Sonata was composed a year before the present work.

Brahms sonatas provide plenty of material for critics and commentators, who label them symphonic and only a stage in his development. He did widen the scope of the keyboard, for he had a powerful grasp of piano idiom; and there are, undeniably, hints of a massive orchestral style to come. A kinship to Beethoven and Schubert is evident, for all art has its ancestry; but there is plenty of fresh individuality and the giant stride of a genius.

The opening movement of the C major Sonata is a large rather massive affair, dramatic and vigorous. The slow movement is a set of variations on a song by Zuccalmaglio and the third movement is a typical Brahms Scherzo. The finale is brisk, rondo-like, and ends, as the work began, on a note of majesty.

Ray Lev, a great artist and forthright musician, plays this Brahms sonata with a complete grasp of its content, as well as with the necessary technical equipment which in this case is formidable. Her tone and touch are masculine enough to encompass the demands of the music. The reproduction is good in this, the only available recording of the number. The attention of the reader is directed to the heading, which states that this work is available only on LP Microgroove (33½ rpm). If and when a 78 rpm version is released, it will be announced in these pages. S.

Liszt: Six Grandes Etudes after Paganini. Robert Goldsand (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (CH-CHC-10). \$4.85.

For one who likes his piano music with plenty of dash and brilliance, like sparks flying from an anvil, music truly in the grand manner, bristling with difficulties and yet musical and interesting—here is a colossal example. These études after the violin caprices

of Paganini are prime examples of transcription at its best and not mere resoring of notes for another instrument. Anyone who likes piano music cannot help being thrilled with any and all of the six études which represent Liszt's finest effort. Most persons are already familiar with the famous *La Campanella*, by now nearly in the "war-horse" class. In this collection of the complete six, however, it only adds a familiar note and serves as a foil for the others surrounding it.

Robert Goldsand is a well equipped pianist, who, while he may not possess the most blazing technique for this music, plays it with fiery enthusiasm, well controlled and steeped in a knowledge of the idiom. This is, in our opinion, one of the finest recitals of Liszt piano music yet to be recorded, and certainly a worthy and needed addition to the repertoire. (Various recordings exist of the individual études). There is little need to issue further praise of this record; the reader can gather that we are quite thrilled with it, and feel that a majority of those who hear it will be amply rewarded. The reproduction is good and the surfaces fine. The reader's attention is again directed to the heading which states that these études are available at present only on LP Microgroove (33½ rpm). If and when a 78 rpm version is released, it will be announced in these pages.

S.



HARPSICHORD

Bach: Concerto after Marcello. One side, and **Bach: Italian Concerto.** Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-LA-5). \$3.85.

The idea of writing a concerto or a symphony for a solo instrument has evidently been prevalent for a long time. In our time we have seen symphonies for organ by several great contemporary composers; this, of course, is logical in a way, since the organ is composed of many voices and has its own ensemble as well as solo voices. In the same manner, Bach specified for the *Italian Concerto* a harpsichord with two keyboards, so that the so-called tutti solo effect of the end movements could be observed. The harpsichord is capable of various combinations of stops and effects, therefore the result of this piece is more than a sonata, although actually it is a sonata and not a concerto, in the usual sense of the word.

No one's performance of the lovely second movement of the *Italian Concerto* quite equals Schnabel's (DM-806), although the first and third movements admittedly fare better on a harpsichord than on a piano. The present version has its thrilling moments when the harpsichord bites out those nice juicy chords and ripples through the fast moving passages. The slow movement has its antique charm, but leaves us cool because of the tone of the harpsichord as well as Mme. Weiss-Mann's rather rigid playing of it.

The original form of the *Marcello-Concerto* was

written for the oboe. In adapting it for the keyboard, Bach, as in all his transcriptions of the same kind, used transposition of one tone. It is in many ways similar to the *Italian*. Both the first and third movements observe the tutti solo form. The second movement is a melody with accompaniment, and is very clever, with crossing parts between the manuals.

Here is a fine harpsichord record for Long Playing record collectors. The tone of the harpsichord is reproduced vividly.

S.

Scarlatti: Sonata in D major, L. 461 and **Scarlatti: Sonata in B-flat major, L. 497.** One side, and **Scarlatti: Sonata in F minor, L. 382** and **Scarlatti: Sonata in F major, L. supp. 20.** Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (V-12-0964). \$1.31.

Upon the domestic release of this superb record, to mark her 70th birthday on 5 July 1949, Miss Landowska wrote the following:

"RCA Victor has had the charming idea of having the sweet little white dog present me on my seventieth birthday with a record containing four sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti. These sonatas have been selected from an album of twenty Scarlatti Sonatas which I have recorded in France in 1940 and which has just now received the 'Hors Concours' award from the Académie Charles Cros in Paris.

"It is a rare thing to bring together on a single record four pieces which give us the quintessence of the genius of a composer.

"The sonata in F minor (Longo Ricordi 382) delights us by the romanticism of its long continuous melodic line as well as by its rich harmonies.

"The sonata in F major (Longo Supplement 20) is a dance, light and playful which reveals to us Scarlatti's love for Spanish dances.

"The eloquence of the sonata in B flat major (LR 497) makes us imagine a poetic text. It is truly a *Song without Words*.

"The sonata in D major (LR 461) reads like a page from a music drama. What other term can we use to describe the sudden changes of mood which demand corresponding changes in tempi or the opposing motifs, the batteries, rolls and cascades unexpectedly interrupted here and there by a love theme like an aria accompanied by guitars?

"May my auditors pardon this explosion of Bacchanalian joy, this torrent of fire. I know this is not appropriate for a lady of seventy, but I cannot help it!"



ORGAN

Haydn: The Musical Clocks. E. Power Biggs (organ). 1-10" disc (V-10-1471). \$1.05.

E. Power Biggs certainly seems to be having a grand time with these charming little musical vignettes of Papa Haydn's. They are eight in number and are

known as "The Musical Clocks." For a refreshing few minutes of delightful music this little disc is highly recommended.



VIOLIN

Mendelssohn: Auf Flügeln des Gesanges, Op. 34, No. 2. One side, and Mozart: Divertimento No. 17 in D major, K. 334—Menuet. Jascha Heifetz (violin) accompanied by Emanuel Bay (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-0963). \$1.31.

Don't let the formidable listings above frighten you—they only mean that Heifetz is playing "On Wings of Song" and Mozart's *Minuet*. Two lovely little melodies that anyone may easily enjoy, played by one of the world's greatest fiddlers.



MISCELLANEOUS

Renaissance Music for the Lute. Suzanne Bloch (lute). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-LA-6). \$3.85.

This record is strictly for the scholar pursuing music of the Renaissance. It has little or nothing of interest to the general music lover, and will undoubtedly annoy him greatly, as we frankly admit it did us. The lute itself has a certain archaic charm which we can listen to as a curiosity; but on the second side of this record, Miss Bloch sings as well as plays. Her voice is indescribable, wavery, poor in pitch, peculiar in every way. Whether or not her style is correct, as it undoubtedly is for this music of which she is a renowned scholar, her voice voids any pleasure which may be derived from the music itself. We blush to say it, but we were reminded at times of Florence Foster Jenkins.

As a lutenist, Miss Bloch seems to perform with a beautiful style, clear, rhythmic, and with great subtlety. The first side of the record is devoted to music for the lute and contains three French Renaissance dances, *Pavane*, *Touts Mes Amys*, and *La Roque* by Pierre Attaignaut. Next we have Germany represented in a slow *Preambel* (Neusiedler) and a heavy Slavic dance *Polnischer Tanz* (Waisel). English lute music is represented by Scotch *Canaries* (Straloch) and *Lachrimae Pavan* (Dowland). Finally two pieces from Italy complete this recital, *Fantasia* (Fiorentino) and *Passometzo in discant* (Nigrino). The second side is devoted to lute songs and follows the same pattern of nationalities. The accompaniments are mainly independent parts of contrapuntal style weaving about the vocal line.

The attention of the reader is directed once again to the heading, wherein is stated that this work is available at present only on LP Microgroove (33 1/3 rpm).

S.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Music to My Ears. By Deems Taylor. xvi + 288 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 7

SEPTEMBER, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

Franz Schubert: The Ariel of Music. By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv + 427 pp. Illustrated. G. P. Putnam's Sons (New York). Price \$5.

Those music lovers, who added one of Mr. Schauffler's former books, *Florestan: The Life and Work of Robert Schumann*, which was published in 1945, to their libraries, will, we are very sure, be interested in his present volume. It does for Schubert what the previous work did for Schumann and very much in the same way. Like its predecessor, the several years of necessary research were subsidized by a committee of prominent music lovers. We are sure that after spending some time with this carefully prepared biography, one cannot help feeling that he is really quite well acquainted with the life and works of the beloved composer, Franz Schubert.

The book is divided into two major parts. The first part contains an intimate account of Schubert's life from the cradle to the grave, and is authenticated on nearly every page by quotations from relevant correspondence. The second part contains a representative list of Schubert's music, a large portion of which is considered, work by work, in a detailed and critical manner. A list of recorded works of Schubert and very carefully prepared indexes complete this important volume. Some twenty-five appropriate illustrations add to its interest.

Robert Haven Schauffler was originally a professional musician before he decided to devote his entire time to writing. He is well-known for his several biographies of great musicians. In addition to the one on Schumann, mentioned above, he has to his credit two others—*Beethoven: The Man Who Freed Music* and *The Unknown Brahms*.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

French Organ Music. E. Power Biggs (organ). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4195). \$4.85.

Mendelssohn: Elijah, Op. 70. Isobel Baillie, Gladys Ripley, James Johnston, Harold Williams with Huddersfield Choral Society and Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra—Sargent. 3-12" discs (C-SL-155) (automatic sequence). \$14.55.

Verdi: La Traviata. (Complete Opera). Soloists, chorus and orchestra of Rome Opera—Bellezza. 3-12" discs (C-SL-103) (automatic sequence). \$14.55.

Edith Piaf Sings. Edith Piaf (diseuse) with orch. 1-10" disc (VX-PLP-3050). \$4.85.

Dvorak: Trio No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 90 ("Dumky"). Trio de Trieste. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-2070). \$5.95.

Stravinsky: Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra. Samuel Dushkin (violin) and Lamoureux Orch.—Stravinsky. One side, and *Stravinsky: Concerto for Two Pianos (1935).* Appleton and Field (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6340). \$4.85.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5. Shura Cherkassky (piano). 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6260). \$4.85.

Paganini: *Concerto in D major for Violin and Orchestra*. One side, and Paganini: *Moto Perpetuo* and Paganini: *Moses Fantasy* and Paganini: *Witches' Dance*. Ruggiero Ricci (violin) with orchestra—Bigot. 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6490). \$4.85.

Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D major*. One side, and Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B-flat major*. Pro Musica Chamber Orch.—Klemperer. 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6220). \$4.85.

Mozart: *Concerto No. 3 in G major*, K. 216. Jacques Thibaud (violin) with Lamoureux Orch.—Paray. One side, and Mozart: *Quartet in E-flat major*, K. 171. Lowenguth String Quartet. 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6420). \$5.95.

Bellini: *Norma*. (Complete Opera). Cigna, Stignani, Breviario, Pasero and EIAR Orch. and Chorus—Vittorio Gui. 3-12" discs in album. Cetra LP Set LP-1204. \$17.85.

Mascagni: *L'Amico Fritz*. (Complete Opera). Tassinari, Tagliavini and EIAR Orch. and Chorus—Mascagni. 2-12" discs in album. Cetra LP Set 1203. \$11.90.

Haydn: *The Seasons*. Gatti, Albanese, Neroni and EIAR Orch. and Chorus—Vittorio Gui. 2-12" discs in album. Cetra LP Set LP-1202. \$11.90.

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67*. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1313. \$6.

Anyone looking for a rousing, capital, thrilling performance of the good old *Beethoven Fifth* will greet this set with cheers. Without doing too much malice to the score, Koussevitzky wrings every last drop out of it, and one cannot help being stirred by his huge and powerful conception of the music. The first movement is taken at a good tempo, and nothing is left unexplored. The second movement is truly beautiful; the third and fourth rise to great heights of interpretive glory, with the finale particularly impressive. There are many spots that will make your spine tingle, and the overall effect is exhilarating.

This album is not for the superstitious (because of the set number); nor for the Beethoven scholar. The

latter will "blow his top" at some of Koussevitzky's accentuations and stresses. Many a brass note or chord is too overblown for truly fine balance, disturbing the melodic line and giving undue prominence to inner voices. But for the majority of folks, that just adds more zip to this reading, and they will undoubtedly like it immensely. There is just no denying the intensity of this recording and the white heat of Koussevitzky's inspiration. The reproduction is exceptionally resonant and bouncy, just a shade too much so for us; but better that than dull any day. Our record surfaces were very good.

It is interesting to note that Koussevitzky once made this work for Victor (DM-220) with the London Philharmonic. It was never received graciously by the critics, although the public consumed it during its day. Later Toscanini made one with the NBC Orchestra (DM-640) which the critics still rave about, except for the atrocious reproduction from dull Studio 8-H. Now that the time has come for a new version, Victor selects Koussevitzky and the Boston Orchestra. The preference line-up, at this time, for *Beethoven Fifths* is like this: Koussevitzky, first; Walter (Col. MM-498), second; Toscanini, third; and beyond that they are all pretty old and poor. Of course, some of us still like Furtwängler (DM-426, if you can locate it); although his interpretation is quite individual. However, the reproduction alone of the new Koussevitzky set would put it at the top. S.

Haydn: *Symphony No. 94 in G major ("Surprise")*. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8021. \$5.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with Mozart: *Serenade in G major*, K. 525. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8038). \$4.85.

Mozart: *Serenade in G major*, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 2-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EBL-8017. \$3.94. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with Haydn: *Symphony No. 94 in G major*. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8038). \$4.85.

For a good, sane, all-around musicianly performance, the dependable Erich Kleiber offers a performance of *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* that should satisfy the musician, the scholar, and the layman. It is a just reading in every respect, and he uses what appears to be a reduced body of strings. The tempi throughout are traditional, and not marred by any personal ideas of Kleiber. In January 1948, we reviewed the Beecham—London Philharmonic set (Vic. DM-1163), at which time we gave a carefully detailed account of his reading and a comparison with the old Furtwängler set. Beecham, it will be recalled, halved the tempo of the final movement, and was accorded very bold and revealing reproduction. The reproduction of the present set is quite good, not of today's standards, but adequate for the type of music—in fact

gracious to it. The general effect is pleasant; we can recommend the album as the best available, except for Beecham's, if you prefer his interpretation of the Rondo.

With the *Surprise Symphony*, Capitol runs into formidable competition—Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony (Vic. DM-1155). There is also another recent version by Sargent and the Liverpool Orchestra (Col. MM-781) which is very good. None of the three sets has any glaring faults. Koussevitzky's has the finest orchestral tone and playing, the Berlin Orchestra is the most "Haydn-esque" in style, Sargent's set has the roundest and fullest recorded tone. The reproduction of the Capitol set is very clear and well balanced, not quite as rich as the two other newer recordings.

As neither the Haydn nor the Mozart works are elsewhere available on Long Playing records, this coupling is worth acquiring, since both are well performed by competent artists. S.

Brahms: Tragische Ouverture, Op. 81. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 2-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EBL-8014. \$3.94.

R. Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 5-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EEL-8013. \$7.88. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8013). \$4.85.

Some interpretations are so great, touched with such divine power, that they automatically stand above any other performances of the same work. Such is the case with Mengelberg and the *Ein Heldenleben*. It transcends others performances because Mengelberg understands every bar of this music, catches the meaning of every phrase, and transmits it to the orchestra and to us with a skill that defies description. The score was dedicated to him, so it would be assumed that he would present it in his best manner; but he goes beyond that with a communication that seems to stem directly from the composer's inspiration. The searing intensity of the Battlefield movement, the breadth of the Hero motifs, have never been set forth with more expansiveness and conviction. The whole thing touches the listener personally through every minute, and we dare say that even the unsympathetic listener will be moved by this reading. Several acquaintances who do not particularly care for Strauss or this work had to admit that here is an unusual performance. The reproduction is not the equal of Reiner's or Beecham's, but it has its own exciting quality and sounds well on high fidelity equipment. This album is outstanding among Capitol's Telefunken releases.

Brahms' Tragic Overture has perplexed many enthusiasts of the master's other works. It is music conceived in the spirit of tragedy, and as a student of classical dramas, Brahms may have had in mind Faust,

Oedipus, Hamlet or another literary or historical figure. There are two subjects in the music, one a feeling of inevitability, sorrow, or foreboding, the other of poignant hopefulness. Which prevails in the struggle is a question which the listener must resolve for himself. Mengelberg delivers this score with uncommon nobility and majesty, and gets deeper into the music than many who try this difficult work. It is the equal of any other recording of the work, better than most. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550.

Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8015. \$5.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (CL-L-8016). \$3.85.

Usually the German school of conducting strikes a sympathetic note with us; they are inclined to pace music broadly and to the best advantage, rather than increase the tempo for effect. This time we admit displeasure, for Jochum takes the first movement too slowly for enjoyment. Why he had to be so heavy handed with it is a mystery, for the other three movements are very fine, the Minuet especially. For a study in contrast, play Toscanini's snappy first movement and then Jochum's sleepy one. Right down the middle of the road with a beautiful performance is the recent Reiner—Pittsburgh Orchestra reading (Col. MM-727) upon which we heaped praise in April 1948. Many of us, of course, remember Beecham's older set (Col. MM-316) as one of his outstanding recordings.

The first movement of the *G minor Symphony* is one of Mozart's greatest creations. It opens with a sparkling theme that sets a mood of gaiety. Regardless of the darker undercurrents which are present, the total effect is buoyant, and the conductors who point up the heavier side only spoil the pattern of the music. It is so marvelously conceived and written, that it cannot stand any fussiness in interpretation by performing artists. A polished performance of good, clean Mozartian style is the most necessary ingredient. That is why Beecham and Reiner have contributed the best recordings, and we continue to recommend them. Reiner's, incidentally, is also excellent reproduction. S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 39. Radio Symphony Orchestra of Stockholm conducted by Tor Mann. Nine sides, and **Grieg: Norwegian Dance, Op. 35, No. 1.** German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 5-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EEL-8020. \$7.88. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8020). \$4.85.

Considering the fact that there are but two recordings in the present catalogs of this popular work, another one is not unwelcome. And after hearing the present set, we would suggest there is room for yet another new one, for the Capitol entry is not the equal of its six or seven year old competitors. One

would assume that a Stockholm orchestra under Tor Mann could bring authenticity to a performance of Sibelius, and it may be that this is an "authentic" interpretation of the music. But any merits the conductor may possess are nullified by the poor orchestra and further invalidated by the poor recording process. The recording process is hardly an example of Telefunken engineering; for somewhere along the line, possibly even in Capitol's dubbing laboratory, someone continually takes the edge off every climax. The violins have their wings clipped every time they begin to sing above the clef, which is very bad for romantic music of this type. Other than that the reproduction generally is not acceptable by today's standards. And today's standards also place the Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra as a runner-up. The orchestra, possibly not too large a one, is lacking in precision and polish, handles certain phrases coarsely, and is obviously not a sensitive and well disciplined group.

We dwell on these gruesome details in the hope that recording companies will be more careful in what they issue. It is no credit to anyone in this enlightened age to offer such poor quality, whether it bears the name of Telefunken, Stockholm, or what have you. Just listen first, then decide the merits.

Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra still have the field to themselves (Vic. DM-881) with a magnificent performance of the Sibelius *First Symphony*, quite well recorded.

S.

Reger: Serenade for Orchestra, Op. 95. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eugen Jochum. 5-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EEL-8026. \$7.88. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8026). \$4.85.

Although the German composer, Max Reger (1873-1916) was a most prolific writer, with literally hundreds of compositions to his credit, his larger works are practically unknown in the United States. With Capitol's re-pressing of the Telefunken recording of his *Serenade for Orchestra, Op. 95*, we have the first work of any size to appear under a domestic label.

The *Serenade* is not a work of world-shaking importance; but it does show the simplicity and transparency which Reger tried so consistently to achieve. One might say that it is "mood" music—a mood of tranquillity and complacence. The work in four movements is a long one and is the type of composition that must come gently to the listener without any noticeable effort on his part. To listen to a recorded version of this music, relaxed, and in the comfort of one's home, would seem to us the ideal way to hear it. In a concert hall, we rather believe that many persons would find that its seeming sameness would pall and that it might easily become tiresome long before it was finished.

We would say that Jochum with the Concertgebouw Orchestra has given a thoughtful and carefully rehearsed performance, and if you do not find this

composition attractive, it is not the fault of either the conductor nor the orchestra. Telefunken has achieved splendid reproduction throughout.

R.

Wagner: Tristan and Isolde—Prelude and Liebestod. One side, and **Wagner: Parsifal**—Charfreitagszauber (Good Friday Music). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-14). \$5.95.

There are several points of interest in this record. First, we have the appearance of Clemens Krauss as conductor; then we find a new recording of the *Tristan* music; lastly, the London *ffrr* technique on Long Playing records. As for Krauss, it is good to have him back again, for he is a distinguished German conductor of many years standing. It has been some years, possibly a score, since he was guest conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra. That was before our time and we know him only from older phonograph records. His performance had to be good to attract London to record him in this important music. The result here is exceptionally fine. His approach to the *Tristan* music is not overwrought and distorted; but of a high emotional fervor, well controlled. The music, as it builds up in the Prelude, glows magnificently; the Liebestod climax is well poised and effective. He solicits a rich and intense tone from the orchestra, which plays very beautifully. The Good Friday Music has the mystical quality that is often missing from performances of this elusive work. Krauss must have the feeling, that undefinable something, which recreates this music and communicates its subtle message.

Judging from record sales, Wagner's popularity has dimmed a bit in recent years. New releases are not quite as frequent now; but the present record has some of the finest moments found in his music. It is recorded with a range and clarity that will satisfy the most critical, although it takes a fine reproducer to bring out the full glories of this disc.

The recent *Tristan* excerpts by Rodzinski (DM-1230) and the *Parsifal* by Koussevitzky (DM-1198) are surpassed by Krauss in every respect. His only competition is Furtwängler, whose unexcelled versions are not in ready supply, nor on Long Playing records.

S.

Berlioz: Romeo et Juliette, Op. 17 (excerpts). One side, and **Berlioz: Les Troyens**—Chasse royale et orage (Act III). L'Orchestre de la Société du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Charles Münch. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-3). \$5.95.

Here is a highly worthy and enjoyable addition to the Long Playing lists, and one which does not duplicate other LP releases. It is also an outstanding addition to the recorded repertoire, for it presents some of Berlioz' finest music in a performance which does it complete justice. The Paris Conservatory Orchestra

seems to be achieving new heights lately; many of their records for London are comparable to the best performances of our large city orchestras. Their proficiency is evident throughout the Berlioz program, music which is difficult; they also demonstrate lovely tone and quality as well as technical excellence.

From *Romeo and Juliet*, Münch has chosen the familiar music from Part II. It does not occur on this record in the order it was written, probably for spacing reasons. The record commences with Romeo's Reverie and Fete of the Capulets, all of it beautifully shaped and phrased by Münch. The next band contains the magical Queen Mab Scherzo, Münch conducting this delightful fairy music with exquisite delicacy. The second side of the record continues with the Love Scene, also knowingly directed, with notably beautiful orchestral quality. The remainder of side two is devoted to the Royal Hunt and Storm from *The Trojans*, which receives very fine treatment here, although the competition from Beecham (Vic. DM-1141) is pretty stiff. Toscanini's recording of the Romeo and Juliet excerpts (Vic. DM-1160) lacked the Queen Mab Scherzo, but his reading of the other sections was the best ever recorded. It is unfair to name preferences here, for each is available only in different speeds; however, were the matter of speeds equal, we would suggest the Münch disc for its completeness, its splendid performance, and superior reproduction.

S.

Four Intermezzi. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-317. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Menotti: Sebastian—Ballet Suite**. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2053). \$3.85.

Music of Lecuona. Robin Hood Dell Orchestra of Philadelphia conducted by Morton Gould. 2-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-318. \$2.68.

This month we have two albums of recordings by the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra—a fine organization, made up largely of musicians from the famous Philadelphia Orchestra, that gives a series of concerts in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park each summer.

The first album with Mitropoulos on the podium, contains a group of well-known intermezzi from the realm of opera—one each from *Manon Lescaut* and *Cavalleria Rusticana* and two from *The Jewels of the Madonna*. They made very pleasant listening in the lovely Robin Hood Dell and we rather believe that most music lovers will find them attractive in the quiet of their own homes.

In the second album Morton Gould has arranged for symphony orchestra four of the best known tunes by the Cuban composer, Ernesto Lecuona. He directs them in his inimitable style and thus we have some popular Latin-American melodies presented in a most fascinating manner. The tunes are: *Andalucia*; *La Comparsa*; *Malagueña*; and *Jungle Drums*.

Handel—trans. Harty: Royal Fireworks Music Suite. Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-319. \$3.10.

Handel wrote this music to celebrate the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1749) and it was first performed by a huge group of wind instruments and drums on a wooden stand a hundred feet high built on the banks of the Thames. It is said that there were, among other instruments forty trumpets and twenty horns. Twelve thousand persons paid a fee of half a crown to listen to the rehearsal in the afternoon before the celebration began. One evening during the fireworks display the stand caught fire and was burned to the ground. We doubt whether the music was ever played again by such a band.

Sir Hamilton Harty arranged this suite for symphony orchestra and it is his arrangement that appears on these discs. It is ably performed by the Liverpool Philharmonic under the brilliant direction of Sir Malcolm Sargent. It is lively and pleasing music that is very easy to become acquainted with and we believe that most of our readers will enjoy it upon first hearing. It has been splendidly recorded by English Columbia.

Haydn: Symphony No. 73 in D major ("La Chasse"). Five sides, and **Sgambati—trans. Sevitzky: Vecchio Minuetto.** Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1312. \$4.75.

This lively little symphony takes its title from the last movement, which seems to suggest hunters at a full gallop. Haydn wrote this section as a prelude to the third act of the opera *La Fedeltà premiata*. Later he prefixed three other movements and thus we have this delightful little symphony which is generally known as *La Chasse*.

We do not recall ever having heard another recording of this work, and so Sevitzky's fine reading of it is an important addition to the repertory of recorded music. RCA Victor has achieved excellent reproduction.

A Bach Program. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-846. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2058). \$3.85.

The Philadelphia Orchestra is noted for its superb performances of orchestral transcriptions of Bach. Its renowned director, Eugene Ormandy, has selected a group of these that often appear on the orchestra's programs for this thoroughly enjoyable album. Columbia has achieved especially fine recordings of all of them. Here is an item that should enjoy wide popularity wherever it is made available.

The selections chosen for this album are: *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor*; *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*

(from Cantata No. 147); *Toccata and Fugue in D minor*; and *Chorale-Prelude: "Sleepers Awake."* The labels do not indicate whose transcriptions are used.

Pfitzner: Palestrina—Preludes to Acts I, II, and III. German Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8025. \$5.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Dopper: Gothic Chaconne**. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Mengelberg. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8037). \$4.85.

The German composer, Hans Pfitzner (1860-1949), has achieved little celebrity outside of his native land. However, his greatest work, the opera *Palestrina* produced at Munich in 1917, has been highly praised not only by German but many other distinguished critics. The present album, containing Telefunken recordings of the preludes to the various acts of Pfitzner's masterpiece, will give music lovers in this country some opportunity to gage the quality and style of his work.

Wagner: Die Meistersinger—Prelude to Act III. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80111). \$1.32.

There are several fine recordings of this prelude available. Our choice would be the Reiner version with the Pittsburgh Symphony. However, there is no question but that Jochum's reading rates with the best, and now that it is easy for music lovers to make a comparison, we suggest that they do so.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto in C major, Op. 36 ("Triple"). John Corigliano (violin), Leonard Rose (violoncello), and Walter Hendl (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-842. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2059). \$3.85.

The *Triple Concerto* is a much neglected work, only once before has it been recorded (Col. MM-327). That performance, by Weingartner and the Vienna Philharmonic, was not especially notable for the calibre of its soloists, although Weingartner's contribution was commendable. Its neglect in our concert halls is for several reasons, principally the difficulty of using three artists, and also the fact that musically it is not too interesting. The latter statement can be traced to the simplicity of the themes, as Beethoven was restricted by the use of three solo instruments. The 'cello has the principal role of the three, and in this performance the part is played beautifully and with skill by Leonard Rose, an outstanding performer of his instrument. The piano and violin parts have many brilliant moments too, and they are also exceedingly well performed here. Bruno Walter is to

be congratulated not only for resurrecting the *Triple Concerto*, but also for the great performance he directs. Appropriately, this is done in the grand manner, Walter manifesting great conviction in the work.

We found the *Triple Concerto* very interesting and were particularly pleased with the concerto grosso effect. There are many passages where only the solo instruments play, the trio being chamber music for a moment, then the orchestra joins in. The trio writing against orchestral background is rather fascinating; refreshing from the usual form of concerto for solo instrument. For this reason it is enjoyable listening just as music; it is even more enjoyable if one probes into the complexities of the score and thinks along with the composer as he solves the problems of a triple concerto.

S.

CHORAL



Ireland: These Things Shall Be (excerpts). Halle Orchestra and Halle Choir conducted by John Barbirolli. 2-12" discs (V-C-3826 and V-C-3827) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

These excerpts are from John Ireland's large scale choral work which was first heard at a B. B. C. Symphony Concert on December 1, 1937. It is a musical setting of John Addington Symond's poem *These Things shall be*. It is unquestionably a brilliant work and is based on the world's political problems just previous to World War II. In spirit it may be considered "old Hat" but as world problems are again similar to those of the late thirties, perhaps it is not dated as much as one might think.

Ireland has done a highly artistic job and those interested in fine choral works in the grand manner will very likely find this pair of discs quite rewarding. It has been recorded by an excellent chorus and orchestra under the direction of John Barbirolli. The chorus master is Herbert Bargett. The tenor solo in the selection *Nation with nation, land with land* is by Parry Jones. The other three sections included in this recording are: *Say, heart, what will the future bring?*; *These things shall be!*; and *When all the earth is paradise*.

Don Cossack Concert. Don Cossack Chorus conducted by Serge Jaroff. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-844. \$5.20.

There is a wide variety in this group of recordings by the famous Don Cossack Chorus. Of prime importance are three selections from the liturgy of the Russian Church—*The Lord's Prayer*; *Holy God*; and *Blessed Art Thou, O Lord*. In the operatic field is *Song of the Indian Guest* (known popularly as "Song of India") from Rimsky-Korsakov's fantasy opera *Sadko*. To complete the collection are the following Russian folk songs: *The Sailors*; *On Saturday*; *A Hazel Tree*; and *Twelve Robbers*.

The Don Cossacks are in top form in all of these numbers and their host of admirers will doubtless be highly pleased with this album.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Tchaikovsky: Trio in A minor, Op. 50. Louis Kaufman (violin), Kurt Reher (violoncello), Theodore Sidenberg (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6530). \$4.85.

Tchaikovsky's *Trio in A minor* is a most melodious work, yet it is a difficult work to perform, the piano part being particularly tricky. Subtitled "In Memory of a Great Artist," the artist being Nicholas Rubinstein, Tchaikovsky wished to write a piano part worthy of this great pianist. This he did, and it also fits well in the ensemble. Tchaikovsky's few chamber works, along with Borodin's, did much to establish the Russian style of chamber music, introducing national features into good chamber music style, but not by way of mere ornamentation or imitation of folk music.

The *Trio* is in two divisions, the second being a theme and variations, the last variation constituting a finale. The first movement, in sonata form, begins with a rather melancholy subject, passes on to a more triumphant one, and the movement concludes in a most solemn manner. The theme of the second movement is quite Russian in character and quite beautiful. The variations are masterly and interesting to the listener. The final variation (third movement) is, together with new material, a summing up of previous themes, it is highly contrasted, and finally ends in an elegiac manner.

Louis Kaufman is well-known and respected as an artist of the first rank; his performance here is excellent. Kurt Reher is solo 'cellist with the Twentieth Century Fox Orchestra and proves to be a sensitive artist. Theodore Sidenberg encompasses the difficulties of the piano part skilfully. This is a more pleasing performance than the old Menuhin—Eisenberg set (Vic. DM-388), and is naturally better reproduction, with good characteristics of each instrument and nice balance. S.

Haydn: Quartet in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2 ("Quinten"). Five sides, and Bach—trans. Harris & Norton: *Die Kunst der Fuge*—Contrapunctus I. Pascal Quartet. 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-9351 to V-DB-9353) (automatic sequence). \$7.88.

This quartet will probably be unfamiliar to many of our readers. We only recall one other recording of it, which was made by the Poltronieri Quartet for English Columbia. It is not included in any of the eight volumes of The Haydn Quartet Society.

This gay and lively work gets its nickname, "Quinten" ("Fifths"), from the opening theme in the first violin part which consists of two falling intervals of a fifth (A to D, E to A).

The performance on these discs is more spirited than profound, but as the music can stand a lot of enthusiasm, this recording comes out quite well. For the musical scholar it may have its faults but for pure enjoyment it is certainly highly satisfactory.

Schubert: Quintet in A major, Op. 114 ("Trout"). Stross Quartet with Franz Rupp (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EDL-8019. \$6.58.

If you are considering adding this popular Schubert chamber work to your library, you should certainly give consideration to this fine Telefunken recording that has recently been re-pressed by Capitol. You will note that the piano part is in the able hands of Franz Rupp who is well-known in this country as an accompanist for both Fritz Kreisler and Marian Anderson. We rather feel that this version is as fine as any available and we thus recommend it.

OPERA



Verdi: Rigoletto (excerpts). Lina Pagliughi (soprano) and Alexander Sved (baritone) with the Orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 5-12" discs in album. Cetra Set 109. \$10.20. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CE-50003). \$5.95.

These Cetra records, contained in one album, offer a first-class performance of the principal soprano and baritone arias from Giuseppe Verdi's indestructible *Rigoletto*. Technically, they are probably the best records ever made of these ever-popular numbers. Artistically they enlist two singers of the front rank—Lina Pagliughi and Alexander Sved. The records were accomplished in Italy about two years ago.

Lina Pagliughi, whom many consider the world's finest existant coloratura, has already contributed preciously to recorded art with her complete *Lucia*. Here we have a comparable addition, for virtually all of Gilda's important music is contained in this album. Mme. Pagliughi sings with crystalline purity and a bel-canto style that refuses to fall into exaggerations and mannerisms. One feels that Verdi himself would have highly approved of so conscientious a performance. Particularly entrancing is the soprano's exquisite singing of Gilda's final duet with Rigoletto. Such purity and steadiness of tone are not in the realm of everyday experience.

Alexander Sved has not the most vital or vibrant tone in the world. His is not an exciting, heaven-storming voice such as Titta Ruffo's, for instance. But Mr. Sved's voice is large and of fine range as his easily propelled high A-flats attest. Furthermore, the dignity and poise of this baritone's style are much to be admired. His diction and textual utterance are vital and compensate for some heavy, sluggish moments in actual tonal production.

The drama of *Rigoletto* emerges clearly, forcibly and authoritatively from these fine discs, which are excellent—the best Cetra has thus far offered so far as surfaces and reproductions are concerned.

The orchestra of the Radio Italiana is obviously a capable group of players and the conducting of Alfredo Simonetto suggests that he knows and understands Verdi's idiom. Small roles are filled in by Dina Mirta, soprano, and Giovanni Gallo, baritone.

The arias included from Act I in this set are *Monologue: Pari siamo!*; *Figlia! Mio Padre!*; *Deh! non parlar al misero*; *Veglia, o donna*; *Caro nome*. From Act II are *Cortigiani, vil razza dannata*; *Miei signori, perdoni*; *Solo per me l'infamia*; *Si, vendetta!* From Act III are *Chi è mai?*; *V'ho ingannata*; and *Lassù in cielo*.

An interesting cut of two beautiful pages of melody has been "opened" on this occasion in the *Veglia, o donna* passage. These melodious measures are never heard in actual performance nowadays.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Alfano: Risurrezione—*Piangi*. One side, and **Puccini: Manon Lescaut**—*Donna non vidi mai* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Giacinto Prandelli (tenor) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Arturo Basile. 1-10" disc (CE-TI-7049). \$2.10.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Enzo Grimaldo, Principe di Santafor (Act I). One side, and **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—*O Grido di quest'anima* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Giacinto Prandelli (tenor) and Antenore Reali (baritone) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Arturo Basile. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-25218). \$2.63.

Puccini: La Bohème—*O soave fanciulla* (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: La Bohème**—*Sono andati?* (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Onelia Fineschi (soprano), Francesco Albanese (tenor) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Arturo Basile. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-25210). \$2.63.

Puccini: La Tosca—*Gia! Me dicon venal!* (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Alexander Sved (baritone) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by A. Simonetto. One side, and **Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera**—*Alla vita che t'arride* (Act 1). (Sung in Italian). Antenore Reali (baritone) with Orchestra of the Radio Italiana conducted by Arturo Basile. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-25211). \$2.63.

The question of what kind of singers there are in post-war Italy often arises. Out of the lifting clouds came Ferruccio Tagliavini, Cloe Elmo, Italo Tajo and Giuseppe Di Stefano, but here is a group of singers who have not yet visited America—Giacinto Prandelli, Onelia Fineschi, Antenore Reali, Francesco Albanese, and Alexander Sved.

To say that this latter group matches the former would be stretching a point, but it may well be that these records were made during career-forming days and that these singers have developed greatly since.

Onelia Fineschi, whom this writer heard at La Scala, Milan, last summer, is one of the present soprano idols of Italy. Her clear *lirico spinto* voice is well produced, though the impression produced in these two passages from *Bohème* is little more than competent routine. The same goes for Francesco Albanese, who is paired with Signora Fineschi. Both singers seem to have little trouble reaching the high C at the close of the first act love-duo.

Giacinto Prandelli is supposed to be one of Italy's best tenors just now. His voice is suave and flowing, though it thins out in its topmost notes. Sometimes, you have the feeling he is singing music that is on the heavy side for his very lyric voice, nor is he always on pitch, as in the *Giocanda* duet with Antenore Reali. The *Risurrezione* aria, one recalls, was made some 20 years ago by Rene Maison on an old Odeon disc. It is interesting to have an up-to-date recording of this seldom-heard number. The orchestral background of the *Manon Lescaut* aria emerges beautifully.

Signore Alexander Sved has a large, unwieldy voice, which is not always in tune or completely steady. His best moment is in Scarpia's monolog from *Tosca*, which suits his bulky tones and violent style. The aria from *Ballo in Maschera* has been far better—and in some cases, unforgettably—recorded by other singers.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Puccini: La Bohème—Quartet (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Pia Tassinari (soprano), M. Huder (mezzo-soprano), Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor), Enzo Mascherini (baritone) with E. I. A. R. Orchestra conducted by Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-2042). \$1.84.

Verdi: Nabucco—*Va pensiero*. One side, and **Verdi: I Lombardi**—*O Signor che dal tetto natio*. E. I. A. R. Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Gino Marinuzzi and Ugo Tansini. 1-12" disc (CE-BB-2064). \$1.84.

Both of the above discs were reviewed in our July 1947 issue when the imported pressings were received. Our readers will no doubt be happy to learn that the matrices have been brought to this country and that Cetra-Soria have re-issued these fine discs domestically at a considerable saving in price.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale—*Quel guardo il cavaliere; So anch' io la virtù magica* (Act I). One side, and **Bellini: I Puritani**—*Qui la voce sua soave* (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Margherita Carosio (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6858). \$2.63.

Margherita Carosio was billed in London last season as "the greatest living soprano." We would not quite agree that she is, but she certainly is a distinguished artist and one that every opera lover in this country will at least wish to be introduced to. The present disc makes that easily possible. Both of the present

arias are well-known and so it will be very easy for each one to evaluate Miss Carosio for himself.

Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Siciliana: O Lola. One side, and **Puccini:** *Manon Lescaut*—Donna non vidi mai (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Nils Grevilius. 1-10" disc (V-10-1477). \$1.05.

There is a steady demand in this country for records by the popular Swedish operatic tenor, Jussi Bjoerling, and so these European recordings of his will doubtless be very welcome to his many American admirers. RCA Victor has re-pressed them and made them available on this disc. The arias are both well-known and Mr. Bjoerling sings them most acceptably.

Donizetti: *Linda di Chamounix*—O luce di quest'anima. (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Puccini:** *La Bohème*—Man nennt mich jetzt nur Mimi (Act I). (Sung in German). Erna Sack (soprano) with German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Willy Czernik. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80110). \$1.32.

Erna Sack fans will be pleased we are sure that Capitol has re-pressed and made available in this country this famous Telefunken record containing two well-known operatic arias.



VOCAL

Britten: The Holy Sonnets of John Donne, Op. 35. Peter Pears (tenor) accompanied by Benjamin Britten (piano). 3-12" discs in album (V-DB-9348 to V-DB-9350) (automatic sequence). \$7.88.

For a proper approach to Britten's musical settings of these famous sonnets, it might be well to refresh our memory with a few facts about the author.

John Donne (1573-1631) was born in London. He was reared as a Roman Catholic. He studied law and later joined the Anglican Church. At the suggestion of James I he took holy orders and was dean of St. Paul's from 1621 until his death. In addition to being a poet of note he was one of the ablest preachers of the 17th century and it is reported that Charles I never missed an opportunity of hearing him preach if he could help it. One of his best-known poetic works was *Cycle of Holy Sonnets* (1618) from which Britten selected the poems which he set to music to make up the song cycle listed above.

Dean Donne's poems are a series of religious meditations largely on the wages of sin and the terrors of death, and thus, their musical settings are in a declamatory style. It is important that one should familiarize himself with the poems for a full appreciation of this unique song cycle. Fine as it is, and it is an excellent piece of musical workmanship, it will probably only appeal to a very limited number of music

lovers. This work was dedicated to Peter Pears who made the present recording. Very likely Britten had Mr. Pears in mind when he was composing these songs—they seem to us made-to-order for that splendid artist.

In playing these discs, we suggest that you keep your volume control well down because in most cases they seem to be overamplified. This overamplification tends to place the voice out of balance with the accompanying piano. By keeping the voice quite soft the best musical results will be obtained. R.

Berlin: Miss Liberty. Eddie Albert, Allyn McLerie, Mary McCarty and members of the original cast with orchestra conducted by Jay Blackton. 6-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-860. \$6.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4220). \$4.85.

Columbia seems to have another ten-strike with this recording by the original cast of the latest Broadway hit, *Miss Liberty*. It is reported that before it was released, dealers all over the country had hundreds of orders on file for it. The show, with book by Robert E. Sherwood, music by Irving Berlin and directed by Moss Hart, had tremendous publicity, even before it opened in Philadelphia last June. It began its New York run the following month with one of the largest advance seat sales in the history of the theatre. Critics generally have not been too enthusiastic about the story of the play but the music has come in for much praise, and as it is the music that is contained in the present album, it is very likely that this recording will enjoy a wide sale.

This album contains, in addition to the Overture, twelve musical numbers; the musical part of *Miss Liberty* is therefore practically complete in this recording. It is gay stuff and as presented by the able actors who perform it on Broadway, it should appeal to all those who are interested in present-day musical shows.

Berlin: Miss Liberty. Wynn Murray, Martha Wright, Bob Wright, with Al Goodman and his Orchestra and The Guild Choristers. 4-10" discs in box. RCA Victor Bluebird Set BN-4. \$2.82.

Rogers: South Pacific. Sandra Deel, Dickinson Eastham, Thelma Carpenter, with Al Goodman and his Orchestra and The Guild Choristers. 4-10" discs in box. RCA Victor Bluebird Set BN-3. \$2.82.

Al Goodman, one of the top musical comedy directors of our time, has chosen selections from two of the real big hits of Broadway and presents them in a most engaging manner in these albums. RCA Victor releases them under its new popular-priced Bluebird label. These are both dandy little albums and are certainly bargains. The discs are made of a non-breakable plastic with absolutely silent surfaces.

The *Miss Liberty* album contains the following selections: *Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor; Let's*

Take an Old Fashioned Walk; Only for Americans; Paris Wakes Up and Smiles; Homework; You Can Have Him; Little Fish in a Big Pond; and Just One Way to Say I Love You.

In the South Pacific album will be found: I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out-a My Hair; A Wonderful Guy; Some Enchanted Evening; A Cock-eyed Optimist; This Nearly Was Mine; Younger Than Springtime; Bali Ha'i; and There Is Nothin' Like a Dame.

Verdi: Stornello. One side, and **Bellini:** Dolente immagine di fille mia. (Sung in Italian). Gabriella Gatti (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-10" disc (V-DA-1903). \$1.95.

One can hardly imagine two songs more different in sentiment. Stornello is a gay little poem, probably from Tuscany, which Verdi has set to lively and attractive music. The words of the Bellini song are from a poem by Maddalena Fumaroli, a reputably beautiful young girl with whom the composer fell in love. The romance was broken and Bellini set the poem to music in her memory. It is a nostalgic little piece full of profound melancholy.

Miss Gatti sings each song equally well and she is splendidly supported at the piano by Gerald Moore.

Wagner: Schmerzen (No. 4 of "Fünf Wesendonck Gedichte"). One side, and **Wagner:** Träume (No. 5 of "Fünf Wesendonck Gedichte"). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6842). \$2.63.

It is too bad that HMV did not supply Mme. Flagstad with orchestral accompaniments for these two Wagner selections; however, they did the next best thing by engaging the services of Gerald Moore, who, to our mind, is the greatest living accompanist. He does his best to make the piano indicate the spirit of the orchestral part that Wagner supplied.

We predict that this disc will have a wide sale in this country, for there are certainly thousands of music lovers over here who will be interested in a new recording by Mme. Flagstad.

Suppé: Boccaccio (excerpts). (Sung in German). Rupert Glawitsch (tenor) and Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with Chorus and Orchestra of the German Opera House conducted by Walter Lutze. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80109). \$1.32.

Franz von Suppé (1820-1895) composed a large number of operettas of which only the overtures are heard today in this country. However, in Germany and Austria they are still given performances. The present disc contains excerpts from one of them. This recording was made in Germany by the famous Telefunken Company and has been re-pressed for sale in U. S. A. by Capitol. If you are interested in music of this character, this record is worth investigation.

The Viennese Nightingale. Elfie Mayerhofer (soprano) with the Radio-Orchestra, Beromünster, conducted by Paul Burkhard. 3-12" discs in album. London Set LA-75. \$7.35.

Elfie Mayerhofer's is a new voice to us. She first won fame in several German films, and she is called "The Viennese Nightingale" by her host of admirers in Central Europe. Born in Yugoslavia, she is completely Viennese in spirit.

Just for fun we dragged out our copy of *Frühlingsstimmen* by Erna Sack (T-E-1774) and compared it with the present record; Miss Sack comes out the winner, hands down. Miss Mayerhofer does a creditable job, but no one can go through the vocal pyrotechnics that Miss Sack can.

The selections comprising this album are *Frühlingsstimmen* and *Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande* (from "Die Fledermaus"), both by Strauss; *Vilja* (from "The Merry Widow") by Lehar; *Ein glas champagner*, from Wehle's "Anni;" and *Himmelscher walzer* and *Das ist das Geheimnis von wein*, both from Schmidseder's "Der Himmelscher Walzer."

Vaughan Williams: Linden Lea. One side, and **Handel**—arr. Somervell: Silent Worship. (Sung in English). Heddle Nash (tenor) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-10" disc (V-B-9719). \$1.42.

The English tenor, Heddle Nash, has quite a following in this country, largely built up by his recordings, many of which have been imported in recent years. The present little disc contains two especially fine numbers, both of which Mr. Nash sings in his usual excellent style. The reproduction is of the best.

A. Dudele (Trad. arr. Low and Bass). (Sung in Hebrew and in Yiddish). One side, and **Rappaport**—arr. Olschanetzky and Bass: A Shepherd, A Dreamer. (Sung in Yiddish). Jan Peerce (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Warner Bass. 1-12" disc (V-12-1003). \$1.31.

On this disc we have two typical Jewish selections sung by the celebrated operatic tenor, Jan Peerce. Both are in a dramatic vein and are sung with great feeling by this fine artist. This record will have a special appeal for those who can understand the texts. Reproduction—excellent.

Malotte: Blow Me Eyes. One side, and **Harty:** My Lagan Love. Christopher Lynch (tenor) accompanied by Eugene Bossart (piano). 1-12" disc (C-7637M). \$1.05. Also available on LP Micro-groove, 1-7" disc (C-3-247). 95c.

Two truly Irish ballads sung in typical style by Erin's greatest singer of her songs. This disc should have been made available for March 17th. Those who are interested in music from the Emerald Isle will certainly go for this disc in a big way.

Valente: Torna. One side, and **Falvo: Dicitencello Vuje.** (Sung in Italian). Tito Gobbi (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6876). \$2.63.

The popular Italian baritone sings two Neapolitan songs in the seductive style of his native land. If you wish something to remind you of the Bay of Naples on a moonlight night, this disc is it.

PIANO



Music for Four Pianos. Philharmonic Piano Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-852. \$4.15.

The RCA Victor recordings by The First Piano Quartet have gained such tremendous popularity that we are not at all surprised to see Columbia enter the field with the Philharmonic Piano Quartet. This latter organization is composed of four young pianists all of whom are graduates of the Juilliard Graduate School of Music. They are Ada Kopetz, Bertha Melnik, Max Walmer and John Scales. They are doubtless all accomplished young artists but as an ensemble they can't, at least at the moment, hold a candle to The First Piano Quartet. It may not be entirely their fault. In fact, as we played these discs over several times, we became more and more convinced that the arrangements, all of which were made by Moritz V. Bomhard, are not to be compared with those used by The First Piano Quartet. And after all, if the music itself lacks clearness and interesting definition, the artists can do very little with it. The recordings of the Philharmonic Piano Quartet lack that sparkle and verve that have made The First Piano Quartet records so highly acceptable to such a vast number of record buyers.

The selections in the present album are: *Andalucia* (Lecuona); *Cradle Song* (Trad.); *Peter and the Wolf*—*Procession* (Prokofiev); *Die Fledermaus*—*Waltzes* (Strauss); and *Toccata Guatemala* (Morganstern).

A Chopin Recital. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-847. \$4.15.

Gyorgy Sandor has been gaining in public favor with American audiences steadily since his first appearance in this country at Carnegie Hall early in 1939. He has appeared with many symphony orchestras and in a recent season he played with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York, the Philadelphia Orchestra and the National Symphony. Mr. Sandor is a Hungarian by birth and studied with Bartók and Kodály. He is noted for his playing of his compatriot, Franz Liszt, and we were rather surprised to see this album of Chopin recordings by him. However, although he seems to have a different approach than

most noted Chopin interpreters, one cannot help feeling that his work is pleasing and interesting. It is surely worthy of the investigation of all open-minded music lovers. The recordings have been very successfully accomplished.

The selections that Mr. Sandor has chosen for this album are: *Fantasie in F minor*, Op. 49; *Fantaisie-Imromptu in C-sharp minor*, Op. posth.; and *Barcarolle in F-sharp major*, Op. 60.

Debussy: Reflets dans l'eau (from "Images," Set I). One side, and **Galuppi: Presto.** Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli (piano). 1-12" disc (V-DB-6859). \$2.63.

There is considerable interest in this country in the Italian pianist, Michelangeli. Thus quite a number of our readers will be pleased to know that the present disc is available here. We hardly think that this artist is a great Debussy interpreter, but he is a fine pianist, and there may be those better qualified than we are, who will be of a different opinion. We are sure that the consensus will be that he does a simply charming bit of playing with the jolly Galuppi *Presto*.

Handel: Passacaglia in G minor. One side, and **Rossi: Andantino in C major.** Maryla Jonas (piano). 1-10" disc (C-17562D). 89c. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-228). 95c.

Two attractive little pieces that Miss Jonas probably finds suitable for encores. They are beautifully played and nicely recorded.

VIOLONCELLO



Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33. Paul Tortelier (violoncello) and orchestra conducted by Norman del Mar. 2-12" discs (V-C-3776 and V-C-3777) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

This melodic work in the style of Mozart dates from 1877 and was dedicated to the Russo-German violoncellist, Wilhelm Karl Driedrich Fitzenhagen, who played in many times on his extensive European tours until his death in 1890. Since that time it has gradually disappeared from the repertory and so these discs will very likely present to present-day music lovers a new Tchaikovsky item.

The work consists of an introduction, theme, seven variations, cadenzas, and orchestral interludes. For those who are not ashamed to admit that they enjoy pleasing melodies it should hold much charm. It is not great music but it is certainly enjoyable to listen to—it is very easy to become acquainted with—one may enjoy it upon the first hearing.

It is given a highly satisfactory performance on this pair of HMV records.

MISCELLANEOUS



Music of the Sioux and the Navajo. Recorded by Willard Rhodes at Wanblee (South Dakota) by cooperation of the United States Office of Indian Affairs. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1401. \$7.33.

Music of Equatorial Africa. Recorded by Andre Didier during the Ogooue-Congo Expedition in French Equatorial Africa. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1402. \$7.33.

Drums of Haiti. Recorded in Haiti by Harold Courlander. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1403. \$7.33.

Music of Indonesia. Recorded in Java, Sumatra, Bali, and Malaya. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1406. \$7.33.

Music of Middle East Palestine. Recorded in Israel. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1408. \$7.33.

A whole book or perhaps a series of books might be written on the five albums listed above. However, as only a very limited number of our readers will likely be interested in them, we feel that we can spare little more than the space to list them. Those who are interested may find them available at the more important dealers in the larger cities.

All of these recordings were made "on location" by qualified persons who were devoting their time to research in the field of primitive music. Generally speaking they have been very successful in securing adequate recordings. Copious illustrated notes are supplied with each album so that anyone interested may gain a very fair idea of what these recordings attempt to demonstrate. Numbers of these albums have found their way into various educational institutions, where, it is reported, they have been found invaluable in the study of the culture of these primitive peoples.

We might mention that all of these discs are made of an unbreakable plastic which provides very quiet surfaces.

Saint-Saëns: Le Cygne (from "Le Carnaval des Animaux"). One side, and **Myronoff: Caprice**. William Primrose (viola) accompanied by David Stimer (piano). 1-10" discs (V-10-1476). \$1.05.

Two lovely little selections that the celebrated violist, William Primrose, often offers as encores—they are exquisitely played and faithfully recorded.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Music to My Ears. By Deems Taylor. xvi + 288 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargair, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musictraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunker, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.

The New Records

Ernestine
8.8

Bader, P. A.
A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 8

OCTOBER, 1949

By mail to any address
50c per year

John McCormack. By L. A. G. Strong. x+309 pp. Illustrated. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$3.25.

Since John McCormack died, in 1945, there has developed a new interest in that great artist. Collectors will go to no end of trouble to secure copies of his records, especially his early operatic recordings, which at present are quite rare. Information about his personal and musical life is eagerly sought. Details of his many tours, the artists with whom he sang, copies of his programs, incidents that occurred at his recording sessions, and all other pertinent data are of prime interest to those who are making a collection of his records. We are glad to say that Mr. Strong's book supplies much such information that is not available elsewhere; in addition there is a list of over 100 records which McCormack made between 1907 and 1939 (see Appendix B). Also, some twenty pages are devoted to a list of artists who are mentioned in the text of the book with a few interesting facts about each, and their most important recordings are listed (see Appendix A). The author points out that those interested in McCormack might very likely be interested in his contemporary artists and that the easiest way to become acquainted with them is through their records. Mr. Strong warns that most of the records listed in both appendices are not generally available. Record collectors will realize this at the first glance at the lists, but many of the records can be secured if the collector has the patience and time to search for them. After all, that is the real thrill of collecting, whether it be phonograph records or campaign buttons.

We would say that Mr. Strong's book is a very informal biography, if it is a biography at all. It contains very little statistical matter and

few specific dates. For example, the author brings his book to an end by mentioning in a most touching way a memorial broadcast in which he took part without giving the date of the broadcast, or even the year of McCormack's death. We were interested and we looked it up in Slonimsky's *Music Since 1900*; it was 16 September 1945.

It would seem to us that Mr. Strong himself, a friend of McCormack's and a professional writer, conceived the idea of doing a book on the great Irish tenor. Through interviews with his hero and information gained from the singer's family and friends, he patched together the matter which is the basis for his book. We are not saying this to belittle Mr. Strong's opus because we think his book is grand; and, being interested in records, we enjoyed it immensely. We are sure that by the method the author used he came into possession of many interesting anecdotes and sidelights that could not of have been obtained in any other way. These give one an accurate picture of McCormack's personality that will be fascinating to all who are interested in one of the outstanding musical figures of our times—one who, despite his appeal to the great masses, was an artist of very high rank, and who had the respect and admiration of some of the greatest musicians of his era. Mr. Strong's book is easy to read; it runs right along and contains much humor, both McCormack's and the author's. We spent several very pleasant hours with it and shall often refer to the appendices for information about vocal recordings of the first four decades of the present century.

* * *

A flood of LP discs from various manufacturers has been received this month and we are making every effort to list as many of them as space will permit. In doing so we have shortened

our reviews very considerably. With so many persons now having phonographs equipped to play LP discs, the interest in them is particularly great at this time and we feel that we should keep these folks informed of what is available. Many of these LP records deserve a more extended review, but there is just so much space, and we believe that most of our readers would like to be advised of new LP discs just as soon as they are released. The only way to do that is to make the reviews quite brief.

* * *

A recent shipment from Italy contained quite a number of recordings by artists of another day that have not been generally available in this country for many years. Included in the lot are excellent recordings by Battistini, Caruso, Cortis, Dal Monte, De Muro, Fleta, Gigli, Martinelli, Pertile, Ponselle, Ruffo, Schipa and other outstanding operatic artists. We have prepared a seven-page list of these records which we will send gratis to any of our readers who are interested. Please request a copy of our list of "La Voce del Padrone" records.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Puccini: *Turandot* (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Cigna, Merli, Olivero, Neroni, Giannotti, Bravur with EIAR Orchestra and Chorus—Ghione. 3-12" discs in album. Cetra Set LP-1206. \$17.85. (TNR Oct. '47).

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Manacchini, Pagliughi, Malipiero, Giovagnoli, Neroni, Vinciguerro, Giannotti with EIAR Orchestra and Chorus—Tansini. 3-12" discs in album. Cetra Set LP-1205. \$17.85. (TNR Oct. '47).

Brahms: *Ein Deutches Requiem*, Op. 45. Hans Hotter (baritone), Elizabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Gesellschafts Choir and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—von Karajan. 2-12" discs in set (C-SL-157) (automatic sequence). \$9.70. (TNR July '48).

Handel: *Twelve Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6. Busch Chamber Players—Busch. 4-12" discs in set (C-SL-158) (automatic sequence). \$19.40. (TNR July '47).

Berg: *Wozzeck* (excerpts). Charlotte Boerner (soprano) with the Janssen Symphony of Los Angeles—Janssen. 1-10" disc (Artist 500). \$4. (TNR Sept. '47).

The Wayfaring Stranger. Burl Ives (vocal & guitar). 1-10" disc (Stinson LP-1). \$2.85. (TNR June '44).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 9 in D minor*, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter, with Irma Gonzalez (soprano), Elena Nikolaidi (contralto), Raoul Jobin (tenor), Mack Harrell (baritone), and the Westminster Choir conducted by John Finley Williamson. 8-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-900. \$9.40. Also available on LP Micro-groove, three sides, and Brahms: *Song of Destiny*. 2-12" discs (C-SL-156) (automatic sequence). \$9.70.

Recordings of the Beethoven *Ninth* are always an event. For the critics, it is an event to sharpen their fangs. Columbia's wartime issue of the *Ninth* by Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra, with the Westminster Choir and Roman, Szantho, Jagel, and Moscona as soloists, was accepted as the best reproduction, but the performance did not please most of the boys. It was considered straightforward and efficient but lacking in emotional intensity and insight for such a great work. Columbia is sensitive to the critics, so we have another try, this time with different forces except for the same choir.

Walter is admittedly a more seasoned hand with Beethoven, and his *Ninth* has a decided enthusiasm and many brilliant flourishes not found in Ormandy's reading. His interpretation is more compelling. We liked it quite a bit until we hit the usual rough going in the final movement, where Beethoven felt the need of voices to supplement the orchestra in order to realize the magnitude of his idea. The use of voices is thoroughly acceptable, but it is questionable whether Beethoven's writing for them is really good. If it is good, it is surely fiendishly difficult. The quartet here is of high calibre, except that Gonzalez cackles. This may be the fault of the recording engineers, but for us she rather spoils things. Harrell, as usual is very fine, dignified yet sympathetic, and smooth-voiced. The Westminster choir is practically a "habit" in these recordings, and they are technically good; but we wager the Oratorio Society of New York would produce a more thrilling account of the massive choral section.

If Capitol represses the Telefunken set by Jochum, the competition will really get spirited. Until then

Koussevitzky's recent set (Vic. DM-1190 or DV-12) and the present version offer many moments of exceptional orchestral playing and interpretive glory.

The Brahms *Schicksalslied*, included on the LP discs is no added inducement as far as quality is concerned. Again, Walter is wonderful with this score; but the famed Westminster Choir uses a very poor English translation and their enunciation of it is notoriously bad (the set was issued in shellac some time ago).

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67.

L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Carl Schuricht. 4-12" discs in album. London Set LA-103. \$9.45. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-7). \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36.

L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Erich Kleiber. 5-12" discs in album. London Set LA-104. \$11.55. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-2). \$5.95.

The Paris Conservatory Orchestra is getting quite a workout these days—London is using them for every type of music, new, old, familiar, unusual, and with many different conductors. They are certainly a mighty versatile (and obliging) aggregation. As remarked in these columns last month the orchestra is fine tonally and technically. That is again demonstrated in the present pair of recordings. London is making a large, strong bid for prominence by building a notable catalog, and of necessity we must accept more recordings of oft-recorded works from the standard repertoire. Here, then, is a pair of familiar friends, which must bear comparison with other performances of note. To simplify matters, we will stick to Long Playing recordings for comparison, as these London versions are at present available only on LP. Thus far only Columbia has competing material: Ormandy and the Philadelphians play the Tchaikovsky *Fourth* and Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic play the Beethoven *Fifth*.

Schuricht's version of the Beethoven is conventional, traditional, idiomatic, sane, and not too exciting—good but not too interesting. It does no malice to the score; we can't criticize it and we can't enthuse. Bruno Walter on Columbia, doing the same work, is a little flamboyant, a little unsteady rhythmically, but in all more interesting. If you own exceptionally high fidelity equipment the London disc will sound better; otherwise the Columbia disc will sound as good or better. If Koussevitzky's new set (reviewed last month) ever hits the LP lists, we will have another story to tell.

Kleiber is a splendid conductor, and he finds things of interest in the score which Ormandy did not uncover. The Tchaikovsky *Fourth*, however, was one of Columbia's best recording efforts with the Philadelphians, and they do play with a keen finish. This one is a hard choice to make, but pinned down, we would

settle for the Ormandy disc, and save \$1.10, toward some other record.

S.

Glazounov: Symphony No. 4 in E-flat major, Op. 48.

Symphony Orchestra of the Academy of Saint Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8027. \$5.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (CL-L-8027). \$3.85.

Kabalevsky: Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 19.

Symphony Orchestra of the Academy of Saint Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8032. \$5.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (CL-L-8032). \$3.85.

Rachmilovich is again having the honor of presenting some freshly recorded material, and again it is worthy material. Both of the works above receive fine performances and reproduction that is extraordinary. The Glazounov we heard on 78 and on LP, the Kabalevsky on LP only. All sounded rich, the Kabalevsky LP having a beautiful round bass tone. The clarity was good and the range fairly wide. All surfaces were good. As the works have little in common we will deal with them separately.

Glazounov is here receiving the first recorded performance of any of his eight symphonies. Many persons have recently discovered that his *Raymonda* and *The Seasons* ballet scores are enjoyable, as well as is his violin concerto; and they will have no trouble with his *Fourth Symphony*. The *Fourth* is broadly melodic, is in three movements, and is not too long or burdensome. It is not of heroic proportions, and succeeds in doing little more than paint a pretty Russian landscape. Since Glazounov probably intended nothing more weighty than that, it is therefore successful.

Kabalevsky is a more agitated and jittery sort of fellow, and his music usually shows it. This business jumps around even during the *Andante*, while the other two movements (it is also a three movement work) pulse and throb along with rhythmic gusto. Kabalevsky pays homage to Rachmaninov, Tchaikovsky (definitely), and Shostakovich, here and there, in his symphony, although it is done in a modernized sort of way. But don't get us wrong, we liked it for some reason or other. Eight years after its Russian premiere it was introduced in America by Toscanini on an NBC broadcast.

S.

Debussy—arr. Leinsdorf: Suite from "Pelléas and Mélisande." Cleveland Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-845. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with Debussy: *Sonata No. 2 for Flute, Viola, and Harp*. 1-12" disc (CML-4090). \$4.85.

Pelléas and Mélisande is, as Morris Hastings claims, an unique and haunting phenomenon, a miraculous blending of text and music, an evocative and mysterious masterpiece that dwells in some twilight world.

There is nothing else in musical art which in the remotest degree resembles it in impulse or character, wrote Lawrence Gilman. These words are certainly true, and before the reader is frightened away we wish to add that it is not a matter of the music's being difficult, modern, or hard to assimilate. It is just a different type of music (as it was written in operatic form) which deals with a story in five acts and twelve tableaux, the scenes being bound together by a series of orchestral interludes.

With this recording, the esoteric group of music lovers who appreciate *Pelléas* will be substantially enlarged. Leinsdorf has arranged a suite derived from the orchestral interludes. It is very effective music, and as he has not included vocal material arranged for orchestra, he has done no malice to the composer's intentions. As pure listening, without knowledge of the opera, Leinsdorf's suite is laden with enjoyment, for it is orchestral music of a mystical and subtle nature. The gently shifting harmonies and delicate orchestral fabric will please the most fastidious musicians, and should appeal to many who are willing to take the next step from *The Afternoon of a Faun*.

The performance directed by Erich Leinsdorf is a clean and well played one, which contains the requisite amount of delicacy and care in shading and balancing. It is not overly sweet; in all it appears to be a splendid portrayal of this music. The reproduction is excellent, surfaces good.

S.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 5-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EEL-8023. \$7.88. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8023). \$4.85.

The Franck Symphony has never suffered from a lack of recordings, and many of them have been really fine. Beecham offered a restrained performance of exceptional subtlety (Col. MM-479); Monteux has a closely knit and rather exciting reading (Vic. DM-840); Münch provided another good reading (formerly EDA-36). At least half a dozen more, could be mentioned which have appeared from time to time. Capitol is not without reason in issuing the Mengelberg version recorded a few years ago for Telefunken. First, it is a marvelous example of reproduction, standing up quite well with other newer recordings. For quality of tone and balance it is extremely pleasant. And then Mengelberg himself contributed to the success of this set by a most convincing reading. It is, in a sense, overdone in spots, although hardly too much so, for the music can stand a fair measure of interpretive indulgence. Mengelberg usually likes to spread himself in this type of music, and his broad approach is congenial here.

We found ourselves listening carefully and intently to this exposition of a thrice familiar work. To those who enjoy Franck's romantic wanderings, this recording should be very pleasing. The orchestra plays with a lovely tonal quality which rises to inspiring splendor in the climaxes. We have incidentally, heard

both the shellac and the LP records, and find them both top drawer for fidelity and surfaces. We are pleased to recommend this release and congratulate Capitol on a wise choice from the vast Telefunken catalog.

S.

Sibelius: Tapiola, Op. 112. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs in envelope. RCA Victor Set DM-1311. \$2.62.

(Two-pocket plain albums available for envelope sets at 65¢ each).

Finlandia and *The Swan of Tuonela* notwithstanding, *Tapiola* is Sibelius' greatest tone poem according to many admirers, scholars, and musicians. The appeal is not as immediate, nor the impact as great on first hearing as his more popular works. *Tapiola* is a good illustration of the peculiar technique and coloring of Sibelius' writing. It is also one of the very greatest illustrations of building a mighty work on one single phrase, a fragment that undergoes exquisite transformations, growing into an enormous structure. Each new expression is a logical thought departure from the one preceding it, and the original fragment, while venturing into strange lights and shadows, retains its essential character.

Sir Thomas has formidable competition, but as usual, is quite equal to it. Kajanu, in the Society set, offered a performance of the first magnitude, which Koussevitzky later did not match. Koussevitzky's reading lacked the strength and character of Kajanu, and the reproduction was rather wild. Now we have superlative reproduction in the new Beecham set plus a reading that is close to Kajanu. It lacks a shade of the intensity to our ears, but we admit it is splitting hairs to argue about it. Beecham does a first-class job, and we recommend this recording highly. Here is Finland, personified by her ancient wood-god, Tapio: powerful, primitive. You should find it a thrilling adventure.

S.

Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-5). \$5.95.

In January of the present year Columbia released an excellent recording of this unique work by the Pittsburgh Symphony under the distinguished direction of Fritz Reiner. We devoted a full column to R's review of that recording. Those interested are referred to our January 1949 issue.

We are sure that those music lovers who have added the Reiner version to their libraries will not wish to have another. However, it is a simple matter for those who do not own either recording to hear both before they make up their minds. The Concertgebouw gives the impression of being a bigger orchestra; this may be due to London *ffrr* reproduction. Bartók's work being a new and very unusual one, it is anyone's guess as to whether Reiner or Beinum better present the composer's intentions. It is up to the opinion of the individual listener.

We rather feel that Beinum makes it seem more impressive; much of the music as directed by him is more revealing to us. However, that might very likely be because we were more familiar with this work when we placed the present recording on our phonograph. The first time we ever heard it was when we played the Reiner version. The present Decca album is considerably more expensive, but if price is not important, we rather believe that you will be better satisfied with it.

Liszt: Tasso (symphonic poem). Berlin State Opera Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 3-12" discs in album. Deutsche Grammophon Set DGS-13. \$8.95.

The importation of this recording makes it possible for those music lovers in this country who are interested to add this item to their libraries. It is a long drawn-out work of unequal interest—parts of it are quite pleasing but much of it is intensely dull—parts are much more pompous than profound. Others may not agree with our opinion but we must frankly state how this composition impressed us. Kempen seems to be sincere in his efforts to present it in the best possible manner and the reproduction is all that anyone could ask for.

Tasso was originally written for pianoforte in 1840 and was orchestrated in 1848. It was first heard in public as an introduction to Goethe's *Tasso* at the Goethe Festival at Weimar in 1849. It has disappeared from the orchestral repertoire in this country; the present reviewer does not remember having heard it in over forty years of concert going.

Elgar: Cockaigne Concert Overture, Op. 40. One side, and **Elgar: Wand of Youth Suite No. 1, Op. 1a.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-43). \$5.95.

Two program pieces in the lighter vein by the English composer, Sir Edward Elgar, that will probably be new to most of our readers. For some reason Elgar's music has never taken hold in the United States and little of it appears on our programs. Both of the present selections are pleasing to listen to, and when one follows the music with the descriptions of the supposed action that appears on the back of the envelope, he should find them quite interesting. The reproduction is *ffrr* at its best.

J. Strauss: Waldmeister—Overture. German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Walter Lutze. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80037). \$1.32.

Suppé: Leichte Kavallerie—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80088). \$1.32.

These two recordings are from the famous Telefunken catalog and Capitol has imported the masters and is pressing discs from them in this country. There are plenty of recorded versions of Suppé's *Light*

Cavalry Overture available over here but the Johann Strauss item will probably be new to many of our readers. Both selections are the sort of light music that most anyone can enjoy and these recordings of them are certainly grand ones.

Verdi: La Traviata—Prelude to Act I. One side, and **Verdi: La Traviata**—Prelude to Act III. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80086). \$1.32.

There are fine recordings of both of these preludes on an RCA Victor record (V-18080) by the NBC Symphony Orchestra directed by Toscanini, and thus we can see little reason for Capitol's re-pressing these Telefunken recordings. However, there may be a few persons who will prefer the present disc—in any case it is readily available for comparison with the Toscanini record.

Coates: The Three Men (Suite for Orchestra). One side, and **Coates: The Three Bears** (Suite for Orchestra) and **Coates: The Dance of the Orange Blossoms** (from "The Jester at the Wedding"). New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-27). \$4.95.

England's noted composer of light classics, Eric Coates, is represented on this imported LP *ffrr* disc by three of his more popular selections. Under the composer's direction they are nicely performed and are splendidly recorded by English Decca. In passing, we might remark that in the future English Decca recordings will appear in this country under "London" labels.

Tchaikovsky: Ouverture Solonelle "1812," Op. 49. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 2-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EBL-8022. \$3.94.

About a year ago, Mercury released a set containing this recording which was taken from Czechoslovakian masters, now Capitol issues one taken from German masters. It is still the same recording, and as we mentioned when we reviewed the Mercury disc last November, there are several better recordings that have been in the domestic catalogs for some time. Perhaps there are some who will wish the Mengelberg-Concertgebouw version but we rather feel that their number will be small.

Chabrier: Le Roi Malgré Lui—*Fête Polonaise* (Act II). San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted Pierre Monteux. 1-12" disc (V-12-0978). \$1.31.

This is the first domestic recording of this delightful bit of music from Chabrier's nearly forgotten *Le Roi Malgré Lui*, which was first produced in Paris in 1887. Monteux has an affinity for such selections and presents them in the best possible fashion. You will find that this music is in no way profound but surely very pleasing to listen to.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Prelude to Act I. Two sides, and **Wagner: Lohengrin**—Prelude to Act III. One side, and **Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Overture. German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8024. \$5.25.

Discerning music lovers can find better recordings of all of these famous Wagnerian overtures by checking the various domestic catalogs. Perhaps there are few collectors will wish the Jochum versions but we hardly think there will be enough of them to make the release of the present album a profitable venture.

Straus: Music of Old Vienna. New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Oscar Straus. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-32). \$4.95.

This pleasing LP disc contains a series of selections from the pen of the famous composer of *The Chocolate Soldier*. Mr. Straus, himself, conducts the orchestra and we presume that these fascinating melodies are played in just the proper spirit. This disc has the advantage of *ffrr* reproduction.

A. Scarlatti: Concerto Grosso in F minor. Wiesbaden Collegium Musicum conducted by Edmund Weyns. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80059). \$1.32. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Vivaldi: Concerto Grosso in G minor, Op. 3, No. 2.** Orchestra of the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino conducted by Antonio Guarneri. 1-10" disc (CL-L-8035). \$3.85.

Scarlatti's *Concerto Grosso in F minor* is a charming little work in three short movements. It is beautifully played by a fine group of chamber music players and was splendidly recorded in Germany by Tele-funkens. Capitol makes it available this month under its label. Lovely melodies for the quiet hour.

Järnefelt: Praeludium. One side, and **Järnefelt: Berceuse.** City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 1-10" disc (C-17590D). 89¢. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-242). 95¢.

Two pleasing little pieces by the Finish composer, Armas Järnefelt (1869-), nicely played by the City of Birmingham Orchestra and well recorded by English Columbia.



CONCERTO

Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Alexander Brailowsky (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1317. \$6.

A new recording of the Chopin *First Concerto* is in order, for Kilenyi's Columbia set is neither distinguished playing nor decent reproduction, while

Victor's older set by Rubinstein was an outdated recording with colorless accompaniment by Barbirolli. There will doubtless be many disappointed souls who had hoped for another new Rubinstein performance, for his recent recording of the *Second Concerto* was very good. But all the choice plums cannot go to one man while other artists are on the roster in need of some recording dates. So we find Brailowsky the choice for this new album. We confess a lack of enthusiasm for Chopin's concertos, but to us, Brailowsky does a noble job with this music. The curlicues, arabesques and ornaments of this improvisatory music are handled in deft fashion. The second movement, *Romanze*, is tranquil, limpid, and melancholy in Brailowsky's hands, but not too sugary. Steinberg works hard to make something interesting out of the accompaniment, and gets what little is there across in able fashion. The reproduction is good—the piano tone very bright.

Although it was the first published, the E minor concerto was actually the second in order of composition, being written a year after the F minor concerto, now known as the second. Essentially a piano composer, Chopin did not write with equal conviction for orchestra or any other instruments. Yet even in the concertos, the piano part is handled with beauty and intensity, dominating the work entirely. The haunting melody of the second movement will linger with the listener for some time after the work has concluded.

S.

Glazounov: Concerto in A minor, Op. 82. Nathan Milstein (violin) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. Five sides, and **Glazounov: Meditation, Op. 32.** Nathan Milstein (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1315. \$4.75.

With this album Victor proudly presents its initial recording by Nathan Milstein, in a performance of the concerto which marked his American debut 20 years ago. At that time he was soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski. And with these words Victor begins its program notes on the album liner. We can recall no other recording of the Glazounov *Violin Concerto* except the Heifetz-Barbirolli set (Vic. DM-218) which this evidently will replace. The Heifetz performance was a marvel, not only for the mechanical proficiency which we expect of this great artist, but also for the searching interpretation.

We accept the sentimental explanation for having Milstein, lately of the Columbia roster, remake the Glazounov concerto, and trust Mr. Heifetz will concur. Seriously, though, Milstein is no let-down after hearing Heifetz's recording. Milstein is well equipped to handle the difficulties of the work, and he has an obvious knowledge of the content of the score. His interpretation is not only sympathetic, but very communicative. It is truly a notable performance. While the Heifetz-Barbirolli set was good recording in its

day, the present set is necessarily superior. We doubt whether Steinberg is quite as deft with the orchestral part as Barbirolli, nor is his orchestra the last word in polished playing; however, Steinberg is a good musician and his part is competent.

The concerto itself is interesting and pretty and well worth a hearing by those not familiar with it.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: Divertimento No. 11 in D major, K. 251.

Five sides, and Reger: Lyric Andante. Berlin Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra conducted by Hans von Benda. 3-12" discs in album. Deutsche Grammophon Set DGS-4. \$8.95.

We had given up hope of hearing this splendid recording again, which first appeared under Polydor labels a number of years ago. However, here it is with Deutsche Grammophon labels (before World War II the records manufactured by Deutsche Grammophon were issued for export from Germany with Polydor labels) and it is a joy to make its acquaintance again. In the interim a very good recording of this selection was made by Mercury (Mercury Set DM-4) with the Dumbarton Oaks Chamber Orchestra conducted by Alexander Schneider. It enjoyed a reasonable sale and there may be those who would prefer this version to the older German one. However, Hans von Benda's recording is a superb one that pleases us perfectly; we recommend it over the domestic album.

Divertimento No. 11 is a lively work that Mozart wrote to ridicule the French musical style of his day; it is rare fun to listen to and quite exciting. It is in six short movements and is scored for two violins, viola, violoncello, oboe and two horns. If you are not familiar with it, you have a very pleasing musical experience in store for you.

Chopin: Sonata in G minor for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 65. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) and Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-854. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with *A Piatigorsky Recital*. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4215). \$4.85.

This Sonata is one of the few works that Chopin wrote for other than his own instrument. It was the last of his compositions of any magnitude and appeared on the program of his final concert in Paris on 16 February 1848. His long-time friend, the violoncellist, Joseph Franchomme, to whom the work was dedicated, joined the composer in its first public performance. For many years this composition was practically forgotten. Piatigorsky brought it to light a few years ago, and it often appears on the program of this eminent artist. With the able assistance of Ralph Berkowitz, he presents a superb performance of it on these Columbia records.

Although melodious, it is a somber work, and many writers hear in it the ominous approach of death,

which was unquestionably hastened by the composer's break with Mme. Sand. This saddening event came whilst Chopin was at work on this Sonata.

Beethoven: Trio No. 6 in E flat, Op. 70, No. 2. One side, and Haydn: Trio No. 1 in G major. Alma Trio. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-LA-4). \$4.85.

This is the first LP Allegro record that this reviewer has heard and he is glad to report that it is excellent both from the point of view of reproduction and the quietness and smoothness of its surfaces. In his opinion it is the equal of any LP record that has come to his attention.

It is certainly a great joy to sit back and listen to these lovely little chamber works without a break from beginning to end—each will be found on one side of this disc.

The Alma Trio, consisting of Roman Totenberg (violin), Adolph Baller (piano) and Gabor Rejto (violoncello), is a fine ensemble and it is to be hoped that more LP recordings by this splendid group of artists will be soon available.

Haydn: Quartet in D major, Op. 64, No. 5 ("Lark"). Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-853. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with *Haydn: Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 76, No. 4 ("Sunrise")*. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4216). \$4.85.

Lovers of chamber music will be delighted to note the release of this outstanding album. It contains the first domestic recording of Haydn's lovely "Lark" quartet, and by the famous Budapest String Quartet. For some unknown reason there have been very few recordings made of this work (it is not included in any of the volumes of the Haydn Quartet Society), and none of them can compare in any way with the present version.

Dvorak: Trio No. 4 in E minor, Op. 90 ("Dumky"). Trio de Trieste. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-2070). \$5.95.

Schumann: Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63. Trio de Trieste. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-2030). \$5.95.

Neither of these chamber works are generally available on domestic records and so those persons whose phonographs are equipped to play LP records may enjoy these splendid recordings. Both recordings were taken from the Polydor catalog and dubbed at 33 1/3 r.p.m. by Vox. They are both highly satisfactory as to performance and reproduction.

Dvorak: Quartet No. 6 in F major, Op. 96 ("American"). One and one-half sides, and *Mozart: Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K. 546*. Griller String Quartet. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-4). \$5.95.

For those whose phonographs are equipped to play LP records here is a fine recording of Dvorak's popu-

lar "American" quartet. The Griller players give an excellent performance and the reproduction is all that anyone could ask for.

CHORAL



Haydn: Missa Solemnis in B-flat major ("Harmoniemesse"). Trude Konrad (soprano), Imgard Dornbach-Ziegler (alto), Ludwig von Haas (tenor), Heinrich Seebach (bass), and the Munich Cathedral Choir and Orchestra conducted by Ludwig Berberich, with Karl Otto Bortzi (organ). 7-12" Vinylite discs in album, complete with score and analytical notes. Haydn Society Set A-1. \$17.00.

That small but steady and insistent demand for recordings of the great oratorios and masses is now being answered. The Haydn Society of the United States, a corporation, is composed of many prominent persons, and their aim is to make available recordings of little known Haydn symphonies and Masses, and also to publish the complete works of the master.

The first volume of records brings us Haydn's last Mass, the *Harmoniemesse*, a marvelous work which it is indeed a pleasure to have on records. Harmonically, the late religious works show a range and scope which progress even further than the instrumental music of a corresponding date. Daring key relationships are often found in these choral works. The notion that the church music of Haydn and Mozart is irreligious and lacking in dignity is one which the Haydn Society considers ridiculous, and we are inclined to agree with them. While the *Harmoniemesse* may be written in a style different from Bach, Beethoven, or others whose church music is extolled, it is just as surely worthy of performance in a church, and in fact, it is generally better performed in that atmosphere than in the concert hall.

The performance was recorded in one of Europe's oldest and greatest cathedrals. It is not quite up to the standard of reproduction we would expect from our best domestic companies, but it is entirely satisfactory. What it lacks in clarity and balance is compensated for in atmosphere, a feeling that places the listener in the church (rather than in a studio). The performance we accept as correct, having no basis for comparison; it is obviously deeply felt by the participants and successfully projected to the listener. The privilege of hearing such great music is only another blessing of the phonograph. This experience will be treasured by those who appreciate large choral works.

S.

Onward, Christian Soldiers. RCA Victor Chorale conducted by Robert Shaw, with Carl Weinrich (organ). 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1314. \$4.

There is always a demand for good recordings of hymns, and thus we predict that the little album listed above will enjoy a wide and continued sale. Robert

Shaw, directing the RCA Victor Chorale, with the very able assistance of the distinguished organist, Carl Weinrich, has made especially fine recordings of a number of well-known favorites. The choristers sing each hymn with their heads held high and with just the proper spirit in a tempo that thrills one, not in the sing-song style of some choirs that tends to put one to sleep.

The hymns in this collections are: *Onward, Christian Soldiers*; *Holy, Holy, Holy*; *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*; *All Creatures of Our God and King*; *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*; and *Now the Day Is Over*.

OPERA



Weber: Der Freischütz (abridged). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin State Opera conducted by Robert Heger. 8-12" discs in album. Deutsche Grammophon Set DGS-6. \$22.05.

Just as this opera is a landmark in operatic history, so is this recording a landmark in the history of records. We could easily devote the balance of our remarks to praise for the various aspects of this magnificent set; however we will put it briefly: the reproduction is uniformly excellent, the balance between orchestra and voices is very just and pleasing, the hall resonance is good, and there is a nice "presence" to the whole performance, with fine surfaces, of course. The performance is one to command the respect of those who know the music, as well as to electrify them with its power and spirit. Anyone, whether or not he knows the opera, will appreciate the quality of this production.

The cast used for this recording includes some first-rank artists. Agathe is sung by Maria Müller; Max by August Seider; Kaspar by Georg Hann, who is superb; Annchen by Carla Spletter; Prince Ottokar by Willy Domgraf-Fassbaender; and the spoken part of Samiel, the devil, by Felix Fleischer. The veteran conductor Robert Heger directs the performance with the Berlin State Opera Chorus and Orchestra.

All of the musical portions, except the overture, are represented in this recording, and occasionally a bit of the spoken dialogue where it is necessary for continuity. To call this set abridged, therefore, is not to imply that any music is missing. The final side is devoted to the Prelude to Act III, played by Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. The opera was recorded in Berlin in 1943.

"In the domain of opera, Weber was that rarest of all phenomena among German musicians—a born opera composer" according to Alfred Einstein. Weber completed *Der Freischütz* in May, 1820, with libretto by Kind, and it was first produced in Berlin on June 18, 1820, with tremendous success. It was first performed at the Metropolitan in New York in 1884, and was out of the repertoire until the 1909-10 season when it was revived with Gadski as Agathe, Robert

Blass as Kaspar, with Hertz conducting. Then it disappeared until 1923-24, this time with Rethberg as Agathe, Bohnen as Kaspar, Bodansky conducting. It was last performed at the Met in 1928-29 with Bohnen again as Kaspar, and Maria Müller as Agathe, who sings the part so beautifully in this recording.

As can be observed, actual performances of *Der Freischütz* occur infrequently. We are therefore doubly grateful for this monumental recording, which we claim is easily worth the price for such unusual and excellent imported records. S.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly—*Un bel di vedremo* (Act II). One side, and **Cilea: Adriana Lecourreur**—*Io sono l'umile ancella* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Dino Olivieri. 1-12" disc (V-DB-5383). \$2.63.

Collectors of fine operatic recordings will doubtless be pleased to know that a few copies of this outstanding disc were received in a recent shipment from Italy. Of especial interest is Miss Albanese's superb rendition of the seldom heard, but extremely beautiful, aria from Cilea's *Adriana Lecourreur*, which was produced at Teatro Lirico, Milan, in 1902.

Verdi: Rigoletto—*Ella mi fu rapita!* (recit.); *Parmi veder le lagrime* (aria) (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Giacomo Lauri-Volpi (tenor) with La Scala Theatre Orchestra conducted by Franco Ghione. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1384). \$1.95.

It has been a long time since we have heard this glorious little recording by the celebrated Italian tenor, Lauri-Volpi. A few copies arrived in a recent shipment from Italy and so we are listing it in our current issue.

Nicolai: Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor (excerpts). (Sung in German). Martina Wulf (soprano) and Friedrich Eugen Engels (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of the German Opera House conducted by Johannes Schuler. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80038). \$1.32.

All of us are familiar with the overture to Nicolai's *Die Lustigen Weiber von Windsor* (The Merry Wives of Windsor) but few of us have very likely ever heard any of the vocal selections. This splendid disc gives us quite a few short samples. For those interested it will prove very attractive.

Verdi: Rigoletto—*La donna è mobile* (Act III) and **Verdi: Rigoletto**—*Questa o quella* (Act I). One side, and **Flotow: Martha**—*M'appari tutt' amor* (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Richard Tucker (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Emil Cooper. 1-12" disc (C-72828D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-259). 95¢.

The many admirers of the brilliant star of the Metropolitan Opera, Richard Tucker, will doubtless be delighted to know that the present disc is available. It contains three very popular arias from two well-beloved Italian operas.

Bellini: Norma—*Ite sul colle, O Druidi!*; *Dell' aura tua profetica* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Ezio Pinza (basso) with Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (C-72826D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-229). 95¢.

Ezio Pinza and the Metropolitan Opera Chorus have made a very satisfactory recording of the opening scene of Bellini's well-known opera *Norma*. As it has been nicely recorded, this disc will hold interest for all collectors of operatic records.

VOCAL



That Midnight Kiss. Mario Lanza (tenor) with RCA Victor Orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1330. \$4.75.

The album listed above reached the studio a few hours before our deadline and because of its probable wide popularity we are listing it with excerpts from the RCA Victor announcement—there was no time for a review by one of our critics.

"Mario Lanza, handsome young tenor, makes his debut this month with an album of musical highlights from his first motion picture film, 'That Midnight Kiss.'

"The picture is based on a dramatization of incidents in Lanza's own career, including a period when he worked as a piano mover in Philadelphia, where he grew up. Lanza was helping to move pianos into the Academy of Music for a concert by the Boston Symphony under Dr. Serge Koussevitzky when he was overheard singing by William K. Huff, director of the Philadelphia Forum. Huff was so impressed by Lanza's voice that he arranged for him to sing for the conductor after the concert, with the result that Koussevitzky invited the tenor to study at the Berkshire Music Center.

"Subsequently Lanza sang the role of Fenton in a performance of 'The Merry Wives of Windsor,' which prompted Noel Straus, music critic of the New York Times to observe that 'his superb natural voice has few equals among tenors of the day in quality, warmth and power.'

"Entering the Army, Lanza had a tour of duty in the Military Police. Back in civilian life Lanza was offered a Red Seal recording contract by RCA Victor, together with a cash advance of \$3,000 to continue his studies.

"During this period Lanza was offered an MGM film contract, but his film debut was delayed by casting plans which called for the tenor to co-star with soprano Kathryn Grayson. Lanza made several concert appearances and then a brilliant west coast debut at the Hollywood Bowl, after which he made his first recordings for RCA Victor, choosing highlights from 'That Midnight Kiss,' in which he is heard singing operatic arias, Italian folk songs and several popular

songs, all of which are included in his 'Midnight Kiss' album.

"On records Lanza is heard singing *Che Gelida Manina*, from 'La Boheme,' *Celeste Aida*, the Italian folk songs *Mamma Mia Che Vo' Sape* and *Core 'Ngrato*, along with two popular songs, *They Didn't Believe Me*, and *I Know, I Know, I Know*."

Negro Spirituals. Helen Traubel (soprano) accompanied by Coenraad Bos (piano). 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-851. \$3.57. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with *Popular Ballads*. Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Charles O'Connell. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4221). \$4.85.

We are pretty sure that Miss Traubel hasn't heard Marian Anderson's recordings of these spirituals, for if she had she probably would have held up the release of the present album. There is no question of Miss Traubel's eminence in her own field but when she invades Miss Anderson's domain, she comes off a very poor second. She meets the same fate when she breaks into the realm of musical comedy as she has on several occasions. A number of her 78 r.p.m. recordings of "popular ballads" have been dubbed on the reverse side of the LP disc listed above.

Just for the record we list the Spirituals that Miss Traubel has recorded for the present album; they are: *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot*; *Were You There?*; *Deep River*; *Steal Away*; *Go Down Moses*; and *Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen*.

Gems from Jerome Kern Musical Shows. RCA Victor Light Opera Company conducted by Leonard Joy. 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set CO-41. \$8.50.

The name of Jerome Kern is known wherever songs are sung, and wherever you find an avid Jerome Kern fan, you will likely find a copy of this delightful album which RCA Victor re-issues this month. Dorothy Chapman, Marie Louise Quevli, Felix Knight, and Alan Holt are the soloists; their styles blend nicely with the chorus and orchestra and their voices are admirably suited to music of this sort.

Included are songs from *Very Good Eddie*; *The Girl from Utah*; *Leave It to Jane*; *Oh Boy*; *Show Boat*; *Sunny*; *Good Morning Dearie*; *Sweet Adeline*; *Sally*; *Cat and the Fiddle*; *Roberta*; and *Music in the Air*.

Sullivan: Trial by Jury. Soloists and Chorus of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and the New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Isadore Godfrey. 4-12" discs in album. London Set LA-108. \$9.45. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-70). \$5.95.

Gilbert and Sullivan fans will be delighted we are sure with this first LP recording of a G & S classic. The recording was made by the famous D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and thus is traditionally correct. It is a generally good performance but one might wish

that the chorus might have employed better diction—the text of the choral sections might have been delivered in a more incisive manner to the better enjoyment of those of us who do not know the words by heart. A leaflet giving the text in full, which is included with this disc, is a welcome aid. It is a great joy to have a complete G & S work on one LP record—listen to one-half of the operetta, then turn the disc and hear the balance.

We understand that other G & S works will soon be issued by London and if they are as good as this one, they certainly should enjoy wide popularity.

Lehar: The Merry Widow (abridged). Risë Stevens (mezzo-soprano), Dennis Morgan (tenor) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Max Rudolf. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-849. \$4.46. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2064). \$3.85.

The present generation may be quite satisfied with this version of *The Merry Widow* with Risë Stevens and Dennis Morgan but to us who remember the original American production with Ethel Jackson and Donald Brian it seems mighty tame. The gay sparkle just isn't there—choruses that should ring with gaiety tend toward dirges, and lively and sprightly solos just drag along. To listen to Dennis Morgan, one would never think that Maxim's was the gayest café in Paris—although Mr. Morgan sings, "I'm happy at Maxim's, where fun and frolic beam," he just isn't convincing—he sounds more as if he had just finished a dull and heavy French *table d'hôte*.

Most of the important music from this most popular operetta of this century are included in this album.

The Legend of John Henry. Edgar Rogie Clark (folk singer). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-LA-8). \$3.85.

For those who are interested in Negro folklore, this *Legend of John Henry* in seven parts (John Henry was a railroad man; His Hammer; His Travels; His Song; His Woman; The Contest; and His Death) will be of prime importance. It is effectively sung by Edgar Rogie Clark, who will be remembered for his part in the Broadway success "Carmen Jones."

Benatzky: Ich muss wieder einmal in Grinzing sein. One side, and Sieszinsky: **Wien, du stadt meiner Träume.** (Sung in German). Mario Berini (tenor) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Max Rudolf. 1-12" disc (C-72847D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-294). 95¢.

Mit einem Seidel Bier und einem schönen Fräulein and Mario Berini to sing these delightful Viennese ballads one might have a most enjoyable time. If this remark means anything to you, you'll probably be interested in this record and if it doesn't you very likely won't be.

PIANO



Fauré: Ballade, Op. 19. Gaby Casadesus (piano) and Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. One side, and **Chausson: Poème, Op. 25.** Jacques Thibaud (violin) and Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6450). \$5.95.

If records could be compared to jewelry, we would say this one is a piece of filigree platinum. The music is delicate and ornamental as is the performance. At first glance, the coupling of these two works may appear strange; but anyone who likes one of the works will undoubtedly enjoy the other. They are an interesting and logical combination, and it is indeed a pleasure to be able to hear each without interruption. There is a delightfully authentic touch here, in that everything concerned with this disc is French: both compositions are French, both soloists and the orchestra are French, and both were recorded in France. As performances they are both superior to any versions previously made. A good modern recording of the Chausson *Poème* is very welcome, for this work appears frequently on concert programs, but has appeared only once in the domestic catalogs. Neither previous recording of the Fauré *Ballade* was particularly outstanding, being easily superceded by Gaby Casadesus' charming performance. The reproduction of this disc is bright and clear, with quiet surfaces.

Chausson's *Poème* has a mysterious quality, a blend of spiritual poetry and beauty touched by religious contemplation. A gentle melancholy pervades the work, relieved by one portion of agitation and unrest. Thibaud is eminently successful in projecting the content of *Poème*.

Fauré's *Ballade* is almost unassuming music. For those who study it closely it is a wonderfully wrought thing, full of choice bits of contrapuntal writing, harmonic changes, and other carefully planned but easily executed pages. It will never make the hit parade of piano war horses, because it's not clangy enough, but the thinking minority can derive great enjoyment from it. And fortunately that thinking minority is growing very fast these days. S.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5. Shura Cherkassky (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6260). \$4.85.

Harold Bauer made a fairly satisfactory recording of this early work of Brahms for Schirmer (Schirmer Album 14) a number of years ago but we do not believe that it is presently generally available. Vox issued the present version a couple of years ago (Vox Album 626) on 78 r.p.m. discs but shortly withdrew it from its catalog. Thus the present disc contains the only recording that may be easily secured.

Of the three piano sonatas which Brahms composed before he became of age, the third, which Cherkassky plays so beautifully on this long-playing disc, is by far the finest. It often appears on concert programs and it is a wonder that more pianists have not seen fit to record it. However, with the excellent version that Vox has made available this month, those whose phonograph is equipped to play LP records have nothing to worry about. And just in passing, we might remark that it is certainly a joy to listen to such a selection as this on an LP disc. The movements are not broken—the first two, which are reasonably long, fit very nicely on the first side of this record and the final three, two of which are quite short, fill the second side perfectly.

A Centenary Concert—Chopin. Mikhail Sheyne (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-LA-7). \$4.85.

This LP *Allegro* disc should appeal to all lovers of Chopin. It contains twenty-one of that composer's most popular selections, including mazurkas, études, waltzes and preludes. Space does not permit listing them. We can report that the reproduction is of the best and that Dr. Sheyne is a pianist of real merit. We feel sure that the majority of our readers will be highly pleased with both the performances and the reproduction.

Mikhail Sheyne was born in what is now Leningrad. His early studies were at the Petrograd Imperial Conservatory, where he was selected for the highest honors by Alexander Glazounov and Cesar Cui. He later was graduated from the Moscow Conservatory with highest honors and taught there for a number of years. After numerous European concert tours he came to the United States in 1929. He has appeared here in many recitals and is at present the Director of the Westchester Conservatory of Music.

VIOLIN



Chausson: Poème, Op. 25. Jacques Thibaud (violin) and Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. One side, and **Fauré: Ballade, Op. 19.** Gaby Casadesus (piano) and Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6450). \$5.95.

For a review of this disc, see under PIANO.

VIOLONCELLO



Mozart—trans. Piatigorsky: Sonatina in A major. Gregor Piatigorsky (violoncello) accompanied by Ralph Berkowitz (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72827D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-249). 95¢.

This charming record contains Piatigorsky's transcription for violoncello of Mozart's lovely little sona-

tina. Mr. Piatigorsky plays it with loving care and presents a performance that is bound to please everyone. Splendid reproduction is an added feature.

DICTION



Benton: This Is My Beloved. John Dall (narrator) with orchestra and chorus conducted by Lehman Engel. 3-12" discs in album. Atlantic Set 312. \$5.50. Also available on LP Microgroove 1-10" disc (Atlantic LP-110). \$3.85.

Walter Benton's *This Is My Beloved* was conceived as a diary in verse. It was published by Knopf in 1943 and since that time has gone into twenty-four editions—probably a record for a book of poetry. Atlantic Recording Corp. secured the rights to make a recorded adaptation. Mr. Benton arranged his poems for this recording; Vernon Duke was commissioned to supply an appropriate musical background; Lehman Engel was engaged to direct the music; and the distinguished young actor, John Dall, was selected as the narrator. Certainly nothing was left undone by Atlantic to make this an outstanding recording in its field; and to be very truthful it is just that.

Mr. Benton's sensuous poetry lends itself to just such treatment. The printed page comes to life in this remarkable recording, and those many thousands who have read and re-read *This Is My Beloved* will doubtless experience a spine-tingling thrill when they hear it spoken by John Dall against the lovely musical background which has been supplied.

MISCELLANEOUS



Recorder and Harpsichord Recital. Carl Dolmetsch (recorder) and Joseph Saxby (harpsichord). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-24). \$4.95.

Carl Dolmetsch, a son of the famous authority on old instruments, Arnold Dolmetsch, is heard on this disc in a series of selections for the recorder with harpsichord accompaniments by Joseph Saxby. Such distinguished composers as Handel, Purcell and Couperin are represented. As the reproduction is of the best, this disc is recommended to all music lovers interested in old music of this character.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Aseh, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Deca, DI—Dise, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Muscraft, NCS—National Cathole Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunkens, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

Franz Schubert: The Ariel of Music. By Robert Haven Schauffler. xiv + 427 pp. Illustrated. G. P. Putnam's Sons (New York). Price \$5.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

See P. 1
B-8

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 9

NOVEMBER, 1949

By mail to any address

50c per year

The Life and Death of Chopin. By Casimir Wierzynski. Translated by Norbet Guterman with a Foreword by Artur Rubinstein. xvi+444 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

A few months ago we reviewed another book on Chopin: Herbert Weinstock's *Chopin*, published by Knopf. The present work is an entirely different type of book, approaching the subject from quite another angle. One might say that in this volume Chopin is examined from the Polish viewpoint. Most biographers of that great musician begin his life soon after he has left his home in Warsaw. They neglect his formative years which were spent in his native Poland. One must not forget that Chopin reached his full maturity at the early age of twenty and therefore his childhood, his school days, his early friends and companions should be carefully considered if one is really to know and appreciate his character and personality.

Casimir Wierzynski was born in Poland in 1894 and remained there until the Nazi invasion of 1941 when he escaped to the United States. He was a successful writer in his native land, and is considered Poland's greatest living poet. He knows thoroughly the Polish scene and is able to picture the young Chopin during his early days. Mr. Wierzynski keeps his hero's life well in balance throughout, and one has the feeling after he has finished this book that he is very intimately acquainted with Chopin the man, as well as with Chopin the musician. It would seem to us that Chopin's music would mean a great deal more to the listener with this knowledge than without it.

Weinstock's book is divided into two sections: half of it is devoted to the life of the composer and the other half to a consideration

of his compositions. Wierzynski covers Chopin's life from the cradle to the grave and simply mentions his works as he goes along without any evaluation of them as musical compositions. Great attention is given to Chopin's companions, both male and female, and full descriptions of his more important friends add to the charm of the story of his life as it unfolds. Because of information that has recently come to light in Poland, Chopin's first mistress, the glamorous Countess Delphine Potocka, takes her proper place for the first time in a story of the composer's life.

Of all the world's composers who have written for the piano, Chopin is by far the most universally admired. His works find favor with audiences in all corners of the globe, and thus there are music lovers everywhere who are interested in him. They will certainly learn much about the sort of person he was, and the atmosphere in which he lived, by perusing Mr. Wierzynski's illuminating biography.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Verdi Duets. Ilitsch (soprano); Baum and Tucker (tenors); Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association—Rudolf. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4230). \$4.85. (TNR Jan. '49).

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade. Paris Conservatory Orchestra—Ansermet. 1-12" disc (L-LLP-6). \$5.95. (TNR May '49).

Operetta Recital. Helge Roswaenge (tenor) with Zurich Tonhalle Orch.—Reinshagen. 1-10" disc (L-LPS-11). \$4.95. (TNR Aug. '49).

Elgar: *Pomp and Circumstance Marches*. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite and Malcolm Sargent. One side, and *March Rhythms*. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Julius Harrison. 1-12" disc (L-LLP-30). \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '48 and Jan. '49).

Schubert: *Trio No. 2 in E-flat major, Op. 100*. Alma Trio. 1-12" disc (AL-AL-1). \$4.85. (TNR Aug. '48).

ORCHESTRA



Haydn: Symphony No. 1 in D major and **Haydn: Symphony No. 28 in A major**. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 13 in D major ("Jupiter")**. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (Haydn Society HSLP-1001). \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 31 in D major ("Horn-signal"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 34 in D minor**. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (Haydn Society HSLP-1002). \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 44 in E minor ("Trauer"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 48 in C major ("Maria Theresia")**. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (Haydn Society HSLP-1003). \$5.95.

The Haydn Society is losing no time in issuing more releases, this time offering several little known symphonies. Future releases will include the *Lord Nelson Mass* and the *Marizellermesse* and a complete *The Creation*. The present recordings were accomplished in Vienna, using an orchestra whose personnel is obviously drawn from the most skilled musicians available. In each case the number of strings used is indicated on the program notes, and it is a pleasure to note the number is considerably less than we are accustomed to in this country. Usually our conductors use a large, juicy string section, with the result that Haydn loses much of his characteristic appeal. Not so here, for conductor Jonathan Sternberg knows the Haydn style perfectly and uses a properly sized orchestra to play these symphonies. Sternberg, an American who has spent most of his life in Europe, is unknown to us, and the program notes devote their remarks to composer Haydn rather than to the artist (also a noble departure). Regardless of his background, Sternberg impresses us as a man qualified to do this job. It is a pleasure to have seven rarely heard Haydn symphonies played with such purity. The work of the string sections is amazingly fluent, their style elegant, and the reproduction is wonderfully

realistic. These records are really quite an experience —far more so than we expected.

As may be seen by the heading, these symphonies have been divided into groups. Nos. 1, 13, and 28 are his earliest efforts and represent three distinct parts of his earliest period. They are sufficiently contrasting to be of real interest. Nos. 31 and 34 are yet another phase, while Nos. 44 and 48 show Haydn as a fully developed artist. For those not wishing to indulge in all three discs at once, which to choose will be a tough decision. The first has the widest contrast and variety, the last the most substance; Nos. 31 and 34 are different and interesting. We are inclined to suggest acquiring them in numerical order, all things considered. All are music of unquestionable worth, in distinguished performances. S.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a ("St. Antoni Chorale"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-322. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Liszt: Les Préludes**. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2066). \$3.85.

Liszt: Les Préludes. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-321. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Haydn, Op. 56a**. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2066). \$3.85.

We reviewed these albums from the LP disc which contains both of the selections, and it brought to our mind the importance and economy of LP records very forcefully. On the LP disc at \$3.85 we have the same music that would cost \$6.20 if purchased in album form. Also much space is saved—the difference between one 10-inch disc and two two-pocket albums. We mention this in passing for the benefit of those collectors who have not as yet equipped their phonographs to play the long-playing records.

Both of the selections listed above are popular ones with symphony orchestra audiences, and they receive superb performances by the Philadelphia Orchestra under the direction of Ormandy. The reproduction in both cases is excellent.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 8 in C minor. Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 10-12" and 1-12" single-sided disc in album. Deutsche Grammophon Set DGS-17. \$29.90.

The first recording ever made of Bruckner's lengthy *Eighth Symphony* was entrusted to a man who has also recorded the *Fourth*, *Fifth*, and *Seventh*. Each of these was considered an excellent reading, although many thought it a pity he did not have the Vienna or Berlin orchestras at his disposal for so important a task. That might be suggested again, for the Hamburg Orchestra is not blessed with the high polish of the world's leading ensembles. It is serviceable, and Jochum is evidently an inspired conductor, for he can

take Bruckner's music to great heights of rapture and enthusiasm. The reproduction is very fine, surfaces smooth, matters which are important for a set of twenty-one sides. Some accompanying program notes would be welcome with Deutsche Grammophon sets, considering their unusual importance, and their price.

The Eighth is in the usual four movements: The first, an *Allegro*, followed by one of his famous *Scherzos*, three sides; then a long and elaborate *Adagio*, eight sides; and lastly a *Finale* of six sides. As in his other works, a certain religious feeling is present, and the chorale plays an important thematic part. It is pure music and the form is logical. The variation and figuring of the subjects in the slow movement is extremely rich and detailed. The wind section is brilliantly scored in many passages of breadth, and climaxes (both Bruckner's and Jochum's!) have colossal power.

All Bruckner symphonies are a large dose and not recommended for anyone unwilling to sit back and relax for an hour and a half. Many of us find it worth the time, although we must admit, the advantages of LP for this sort of thing are beyond question. This set would benefit in unity and coherence, and our enjoyment would increase immeasurably. S.

Debussy: Images pour Orchestra, Set III. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-44). \$5.95.

For the first time, *Images*, Set III, for orchestra, has been recorded at one time by one conductor. Part two, *Iberia*, is familiar to nearly everyone and has been recorded several times, once quite beautifully by Fritz Reiner. Part one, *Gigues*, and part three, *Rondes de printemps*, were superlatively recorded by Pierre Monteux a few years ago. For those wondering about sets I and II of *Images*, they were written for piano in 1905 and 1907 respectively, consist of three pieces each, and are well known (*Reflets dans l'eau*, etc.).

The only relationship between the three pieces making up Set III is that they are based on folk music. *Iberia* is basically Spanish, *Rondes* is French, and *Gigues* is English. *Gigues*, listed as No. 1, was actually the last to be written. Originally a piano duet, it was orchestrated by Caplet, under Debussy's direction, in 1912. In this recording it is followed on side one by *Rondes*, full of unusual timbres and unexpected dissonances. The record's second side is devoted to an uninterrupted performance of *Iberia*. The three parts of this suite are (translated): In the streets and by-ways; The fragrance of the night; and The morning of a festival day. Castanets and tambourines establish the atmosphere; thematic material knits together the three sections which are well contrasted in mood.

Ansermet is emerging as one of our finest and most dependable conductors, whose ability embraces several types of music. Here he is the impressionist, and

he does a fine-grained job. The recording, made at Victoria Hall, Geneva, is good *ffrr*, capturing the subtleties nicely. S.

Reger: Variations on a Theme by Mozart, Op. 132. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 5-12" discs in album. Deutsche Grammophon Set DGS-2. \$14.20.

A previous recording by Karl Böhm and the Saxon State Orchestra appeared in the Victor catalog, October 1941, as a repressing of the 1937 imported recording. It was subsequently withdrawn. If you can locate a copy of that performance you will have everything except the excellent reproduction of the present set, and save about 60% of the cost. Reger's zealots undoubtedly own the earlier set by now; the rest of us will think twice before acquiring this questionable and expensive item. Reger has constructed a set of variations that are, in their way, clever and skillful and mighty well orchestrated. They are built on the theme from the first movement of Mozart's Piano Sonata in A, K. 331, a theme which Mozart himself did not do such a bad job of "variating." Mozart, of course, treated his own theme to variations of grace and simplicity; Reger belabors the theme with his variations. He had a right to choose any theme he wanted, but it rather annoys us to hear this ingenuity applied to the particular theme at hand—because of previous associations.

Van Beinum loses no opportunity, and there are plenty of them, to display the cunning contrasts, artful orchestration, and crafty devices of these variations. His orchestra is excellent, well reproduced, and aided by quiet surfaces. We cannot go all-out for the music itself, even though we must admit those wayward variations are inordinately clever! S.

Hindemith: Symphonic Metamorphosis on Themes of Carl Maria von Weber (1943). Five sides, and Dvorak—arr. Szell: Slavonic Dance No. 15 in C, Op. 72, No. 7. The Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-855. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with Hindemith: Nobilissima Visione. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4177). \$4.85.

Those who are admirers and followers of Hindemith and who understand and appreciate his compositions consider this work something of a mistake. It is, of course, more melodious and gayer than other Hindemith, and its orchestration is rather heavy and overloaded. Therefore those who are not in the group of Hindemith admirers may find this work to their liking, for it is certainly very light and easy to take. Whether or not it is really good music can be answered for both groups—it is not. But that does not make it any the less enjoyable.

A suite in four movements, *Metamorphosis* employs unfamiliar themes from Weber's pen. Three movements use piano duet themes, the second movement

uses a theme Weber found in Rousseau's *Dictionnaire de Musique* which Weber used in his *Overtura Chinesa* and in his incidental music for *Turandot*. Hindemith has made alterations in these themes, and at times has used them attractively.

Szell plays the music with conviction and his customary precision. The *Slavonic Dance*, on the odd side, is superatively done. Reproduction and surfaces are splendid. The LP is particularly successful, and has a magnificent coupling, making it doubly desirable. S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 93 in D. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Guido Cantelli. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1323. \$4.75.

The present album is of particular interest because it introduces to record collectors the young Italian conductor, Guido Cantelli. Maestro Cantelli, after considerable success in his native land despite his youth—he is only twenty-eight years of age—was brought to America by Toscanini as guest conductor of the NBC Symphony. He was enthusiastically received by music lovers on this side of the Atlantic, and his celebrity in this country seems assured. His first American recording, therefore, is of considerable importance.

One cannot judge a conductor by listening to his recordings of a Haydn symphony, especially such a pleasing and attractive one as is contained in the present album. There is no question but that Cantelli has given us a fine rendition of this symphony, and we believe that most music lovers will go along with us in our praise of his recorded version of it. Just about ten years ago Beecham and the London Philharmonic made a recording of this work for Columbia but we are sure that most persons would prefer the modern version—considerable progress has been made in orchestral reproduction in the last decade.

R. Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1321. \$7.25.

(This annotation is reprinted from the October 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

The British reviewers greeted this set with unusual warmth a few months ago when it made its appearance. Not only was it conducted by their favorite son, but (while they did not mention this) it marked the first recording of the work made in England, whose catalogs are somewhat lean in Richard Strauss' works. In fact, five other recordings of this work are listed in the Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia; three of them were made in America. Mengelberg began the procession with a massive reading; Ormandy came along some years later with a four-square job; Rodzinski was on his heels with another fine reading; and, but three months ago,

Fritz Reiner appeared with a new set (Col. MM-748). Reiner's reading found high favor with nearly all the critics in this country and received our high praises, too.

Comparing Reiner's set with Beecham's is actually not interesting at all, although comparisons usually are. Their readings are so similar that at times it is hard to tell them apart. In the final analysis, Beecham is a bit clearer in detail, and the reproduction of his set a bit more finely etched. But these bits are hardly worth the wide difference in price, except for those who succumb to the spell of things imported, rare, and expensive. The rest of us may safely choose Reiner's thoughtful and well controlled interpretation, knowing we have the best of the domestic versions, and one equal to the challenge of Beecham's imported version.

Having heard this work several times in a few months, we found a renewed interest in the work, and feel compelled to say a few words in praise of the music as well as its various performances. It is about the last of Strauss' great tone-poems, and built around an elaborate program in which any of us might picture himself as the hero. The power and poetry have quite a pull which you might enjoy investigating again. S.

Stravinsky: Orpheus. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1320. \$6.

From RCA Victor's announcement of this album we learn that Stravinsky's ballet *Orpheus* was commissioned by Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Society in 1946. The ballet was completed in Hollywood on 23 September 1947. The first performance was given by Mr. Kirstein's company at the New York City Center on 29 April 1948 with the composer conducting. In the concert performance recorded on these discs the ballet score is used without alteration. As the performance takes just about thirty minutes it occurs to us that it would be very nice to have it recorded on one 10-inch LP disc. Perhaps RCA Victor will eventually come around to this modern method of reproduction—we surely hope so.

Robert Craft has supplied very exhaustive notes which will be found on the inside cover of this album. The story of the ballet is carefully outlined and a description of the music in considerable detail is included. These notes are a great help in a proper approach to the music. As this recorded performance was conducted by Stravinsky, we presume that the music is presented as the composer wishes it to be heard. The reproduction is excellent throughout.

Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye Suite. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-320. \$3.10.

Listed as "Five Children's Pieces for Orchestra," this delightful work was orchestrated from 4-hand piano pieces which Ravel wrote for the amusement

of two children to whom he dedicated them. It would be an unusual child, however, who followed the melodic lines and the intricate harmonic patterns of Maurice Ravel with the same understanding enthusiasm with which he listens to the tales of Mrs. Goose! The same colorful imagination, the signal skills as an orchestrator, and the keen sense of humor which is displayed in Ravel's other important works are all to be found in these delightful musical tableaus.

Kostelanetz presents a highly satisfactory performance of this delightful work but he is in stiff competition with the recent RCA Victor recording by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. We rather believe that most music lovers will prefer the latter.

Prokofiev: Cinderella. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-859. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Gordon: The Rake's Progress**. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4229). \$4.85.

This album contains a Suite made up of several excerpts from Prokofiev's ballet *Cinderella*. The composer worked on this ballet during 1941-1944. After performances in Russia, it was given in London by the famous Sadler's Wells Ballet under the direction of Warwick Braithwaite, the gentleman who conducts the orchestra for the present recording. The first English performance was given during January of the present year and received high praise from the critics. Ballet fans will doubtless find this new album quite exciting. The reproduction is of the best.

The present Suite consists of seven sections, namely: Sewing Scene; Cinderella's Gavotte; Midnight Waltz; Fairy Godmother; The Seasons; Pas de deux; and Apotheosis-Finale.

Mozart: Maurerische Trauermusik, K. 477 (Masonic Funeral Music). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (C-72846D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-288). 95¢.

Mozart joined Freemasonry when he was twenty-nine years of age, and from then until his death six years later the mysticism and sense of brotherhood of that order had a marked influence on his outlook upon life. Shortly after he became a Freemason he composed the funeral music to be found upon the present record, and a few months before he died he collaborated with Schikaneder in writing a cantata for a special Masonic Festival that was held about three weeks before his death.

The *Maurerische Trauermusik* is rather in the form of a dirge and abounds in somber melodies. It is probably of more historic significance than musical importance. It has been sympathetically rendered and nicely recorded on the present disc.

Offenbach—arr. Rosenthal: Gaité Parisienne—Ballet. Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-325. \$3.10. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Russian Music**. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4233). \$4.85.

Just about ten years ago, Columbia issued a recording of these excerpts from the famous ballet *Gaité Parisienne* by Efrem Kurtz and the London Philharmonic. It was tremendously successful and was one of the largest selling albums ever released by Columbia. We suppose that Columbia thought that it was about time to make a more modern recording and thus Mr. Kurtz was engaged again and the present album is the result.

Mr. Kurtz is an experienced conductor of ballets and he presents this rather trite music in a manner that makes it at least engaging. Columbia has achieved most realistic reproduction.

Anderson: Sleigh Ride. One side, and **Anderson: Serenata.** Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-10" disc (V-10-1484). \$1.05.

Two Tuneful selections that should find an appropriate place on Boston "Pops" programs. Both selections are by Leroy Anderson, whose *Chicken Reel* and *Fiddle Faddle* were big sellers when they were recorded by Boston "Pops" several months ago. The *Sleigh Ride* is a descriptive piece with sleigh bells, crack of the whip, etc. *Serenata* is in the Spanish mood. Neither have any musical value, but are amusing.

Mozart: Deutsche Tänze No. 3, K. 605. ("Die Schlittenfahrt"). One side, and **Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a**—Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1487). \$1.05.

Two little classical selections that should appeal to most children—a nice disc for a Christmas gift for a little boy or girl who appreciates music other than popular tunes of the day. Splendidly played and nicely recorded.

CONCERTO



Bartók: Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra (1930-31). Andor Földes (piano) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. One and one-half sides, and **Bartók: Sonata for Piano** (1926). Andor Földes (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6620). \$5.95.

Many persons not previously fond of Bartók's music were completely captivated by his *Concerto for Orchestra*. They will cast about for some time until they find other works of his as easy to assimilate, excepting some of the smaller pieces. The *Piano Concerto*

No. 2 is more involved and less appealing on first hearing than the *Concerto for Orchestra*. Repeated hearings, however, will convince most folks that Bartók's skill has never been fully appreciated, for he commands a nearly unlimited stock of harmonic, contrapuntal, rhythmic, and other mechanical devices. Add also strikingly colorful use of the orchestra, whose resources he exploits simultaneously with those of the piano. The score dates from 1930-31 when Bartók was especially pre-occupied with Hungarian folksong material. There is nothing dry or academic about this music, but it is compact and complex. We also imagine it is fiendishly difficult.

Andor Földes, the Hungarian-American pianist, is perfectly qualified, and well equipped, to present the first recording of the *Second Concerto*. The orchestral part is well done and the reproduction very satisfactory—surfaces extremely quiet. Your first Bartók piano concerto should be the *Third*, recorded by Gyorgy Sandor; if you already know that one, the *Second* is well worth a hearing.

The *Sonata for Piano* is really a hard Bartók work to appreciate, for it dates from a period when he was working to achieve the utmost economy and maximum impact in his tonal utterance. The third movement in rondo-variation form will dawn first for you, but you will work hard to discover the message of the other movements. S.

Villa-Lobos: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra. Ellen Ballon (piano) with l'Orchestra de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-77). \$5.95.

Although the number of compositions of the Brazilian master runs well over one thousand, we have here his first piano concerto. A prolific composer for piano, solo and in combination with orchestra, Villa-Lobos did not write a formal piano concerto until 1945, when he completed this work, dedicated to Ellen Ballon, the present soloist, whom he met in New York early in that year.

The concerto is characteristic of Villa-Lobos as we know him from previous works. There is something unique and personal about all his writing which stamps it as his, and also as a product of Brazil, whose spirit is contained in all the music of her greatest composer. One thing distinguishes this work and that is its formal structure, missing from so many of his larger works. Here we find a unified work, not only by its use of the classical sonata form, but also by its unyielding control of thematic material and by its rhythmic coherence. The amazing thing about all of this is that the adherence to form has not in the least robbed the concerto of Villa-Lobos' spontaneity, excitement, originality, and other such hallmarks.

While the *Piano Concerto* may never make the hit lists, it is bound to find favor with those seeking something refreshing and new in this form. It will be remembered that *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5*, a

Columbia single by Bidu Sayão, has appeared on the best-seller list for well over a year. At least this piece deserves to make the *Best-Selling-Concertos-on-LP* list.

Having no basis for comparison, we can only assume the present performance to be idiomatic and authoritative. Ellen Ballon has a formidable technique which encompasses the difficulties of this work with ease, and the dependable Ansermet eschews the tricky rhythmic patterns in the orchestral score with his usual skill. It all sounds first rate to us. Reproduction is characteristic London LP. S.

Bach: Clavier Concerto No. 2 in E major. Louise Thyrion (piano) and the Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. One side, and **Bach: Violin Concerto No. 2 in E major.** Ruggiero Ricci (violin) and the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6630). \$5.95.

Of particular interest is the recording of Bach's *Clavier Concerto No. 2 in E major*—a first recording of this work. As we listened to it, we could not help wondering why it had not been recorded before and why it is so seldom heard in our concert halls. To us it appealed greatly. It is tuneful and most pleasing to listen to. The lighthearted first movement attracts instantly; the second movement is a lovely little *Siciliano*; it concludes with a brilliant section taken at high speed. Miss Thyrion gives a spirited and very intelligent performance and she is ably supported by a fine small orchestra. All in all we have nothing but praise for this recording.

The *Violin Concerto No. 2 in E major* has been recorded several times previously—Menuhin, Adolf Busch, Louis Kaufman, and Huberman have each offered a recording of it. As we recall these earlier versions and compare them with the present one by the brilliant violinist, Ruggiero Ricci, we would say that Mr. Ricci rates very well with any of the distinguished group mentioned above. We certainly believe that most music lovers will be entirely satisfied with his performance and with the support given him by the Lamoureux Orchestra.

Handel—arr. Wood: Concerto No. 9 in B-flat major, Op. 7, No. 3. George Thalben-Ball (organ) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. Five sides, and **Arne—arr. Thalben-Ball: Concerto No. 6 in B-flat major—Allegro Moderato.** George Thalben-Ball (organ). 3-12" discs in album (V-C-7741 to V-C-7743). \$5.99.

Here is an outstanding set of records! One that we cannot praise too highly. There are few recordings available of concertos for organ and orchestra and certainly none more worthy of consideration by discerning music lovers than the present one. To our mind it is an artistic triumph in which the composer, the arranger, the soloist, and the orchestra share about equally, and we should add that all would

be of little value if the HMV technicians had not accomplished the faithful reproduction that they have on these marvelous discs.

We do not often go all out for a recording, but we surely are anxious to do so for this one, because we are very sure that it will thrill and please nearly every one who hears it. This work is melodious throughout and yet it has enough sound music in it so that it will not easily pall—we have played these records at least a dozen times and always with ever increasing enjoyment.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Chopin: Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 65. Edmund Kurtz (violoncello) and Artur Balsam (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1322. \$4.75.

Last month Columbia issued a superb performance of this almost forgotten work by Piatigorsky and Berkowitz, and this month RCA Victor offers a performance by Kurtz and Balsam. Certainly no one wants two recorded versions of this selection in his library and those who purchased the Piatigorsky-Berkowitz version last month need not be concerned. In our opinion, it is a shade better than the present one. Piatigorsky is given credit for having re-discovered this work, and through his having played it numerous times in public he has renewed interest in it.

See last month's issue of TNR for a few brief remarks about this work.

Mendelssohn: Quartet No. 3 in D major, Op. 44, No. 1. Gulet String Quartet. One side, and **Weber: Trio in G minor, Op. 63.** Rene Leroy (flute), Janos Scholz (violoncello), and Erno Balogh (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6390). \$4.85.

The true chamber music connoisseur will probably be quick to point out that neither of the pieces on this LP disc should be considered in the realm of great chamber music. However, if one listens to the music without attempting to analyze the craftsmanship of the composition, he should have many minutes of real enjoyment from the selections on this record. Both performances are top-notch and the recordings have been nicely accomplished.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in D major, Op. 12, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G major, Op. 96.** Roman Totenberg (violin) and Adolph Baller (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-LA-2). \$4.85.

It is a great joy to have these two charming Beethoven sonatas for violin and piano on one LP disc—one on each side. And when they are played by two such fine artists as Roman Totenberg and Adolph Baller, we have a chamber music record that deserves high praise.

As mentioned last month, Allegro is issuing LP discs as fine as any present publisher. Those interested in LP recordings should watch for Allegro's monthly releases.

CHORAL



Christmas Carols. Mount Holyoke College Glee Club conducted by Ruth Douglass. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-856. \$4.15. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Christmas Carols.** Celebrity Quartette. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4231). \$4.85.

Christmas Carols. Celebrity Quartette: Isobel Baillie (soprano), Gladys Ripley (contralto), John McHugh (tenor), and Harold Williams (bass-baritone), with Herbert Dawson (organ). 3-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-857. \$3.57. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Christmas Carols.** Mount Holyoke College Glee Club. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4231). \$4.85.

The first album contains a group of Christmas carols of many lands sung in English by a female choir made up of students of Mount Holyoke College. Carols from various sections of France, from England, Germany and Sweden are included in this collection. Few if any of them will be familiar to the average listener and so this album will not have any general appeal. It is intended for the specialist, and we wonder whether he will be satisfied to have them not sung in their native tongues. Better hear these records before you buy them so that you are sure that they are what you wish.

The second album contains a group of well-known Christmas carols sung by a mixed-quartet of outstanding English soloists. Despite the excellence of the voices you must be sure that you will prefer your carols sung by a quartet rather than by a chorus before you invest in this album. The carols are: *O Come All Ye Faithful*; *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing*; *Away in a Manger*; *The First Nowell*; *Christians, Awake!*; and *The Coventry Carol*.

The Mormon Tabernacle Choir. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir of Salt Lake City conducted by J. Spencer Cornwall, with Frank Asper (organ). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-861. \$5.20. Also available on LP Microgroove. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2077). \$3.85.

The Mormon Tabernacle Choir has been broadcasting continuously for over twenty years and is thus one of the best known choirs in the United States. It consists of nearly four hundred voices, both male and female, and its repertoire is tremendous. Columbia plans to issue a series of albums containing recordings of this famous musical organization; the present album is the first. It contains twelve

hymns all of which will be familiar to those who listen to the choir's broadcasts. They are: *Come, Come Ye Saints*; *O My Father*; *Abide With Me*; *Guide Us, O Thou Great Jehovah*; *Praise the Lord*; *Faith of Our Fathers*; *The Lord's Prayer*; *O Worship the King*; *A Mighty Fortress*; *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*; *Now Thank We All Our God*; and *Lift Thine Eyes*.

Columbia has been most successful in recording this huge choir—not an easy thing to do—and thus we are sure that the choir's many friends scattered throughout the country will find these discs highly satisfactory.

Bach: Chorales. (Sung in German). Pro Musica Choral Society conducted by Crane Calder. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-10). \$3.85.

The Pro Musica Choral Society is composed of a group of professional singers who have gotten together to sing for their own pleasure. They have specialized in singing Bach chorales and they hope to make a series of recordings of them of which this is the first. We do not expect that they will sing all of the more than two hundred that Bach composed but they are making a good start by including fifteen on this first disc. Among them are: *Christ lag in Todesbanden*; *Jesu, meine Freude*; *Christus, der ist mein Leben*; and *Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier*.

There are few good vocal recordings of Bach and so the present disc is a worthy addition to the repertory of recorded music. We thoroughly enjoyed the singing of this group and we do not hesitate to recommend this record.

OPERA



Puccini: La Tosca—Recondita armonia (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: La Fanciulla del West**—Ch'ella mi creda libero (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Jan Peerce (tenor) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-10" disc (V-10-1486). \$1.05.

Jan Peerce seems to be continually growing in stature and we are sure that opera fans will be delighted with his new record containing two well-known Puccini arias. The reproduction is excellent throughout.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godunov—Death of Boris: Hark the Passing Bell (Act IV). (Sung in Russian). Ralph Arie (bass) with choir and London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (L-T-5125). \$2.10.

Considering this recording from all angles it is the best available of the *Death of Boris*. Along with many other music lovers, however, we will never give up our recording of this scene by the unsurpassable

Chaliapin. We are going to add the present version to our library because of the great advantage of *fmrr* reproduction but we are going to retain the older disc because we just don't believe any one could equal Chaliapin in the role of Boris.

An Operatic Recital. Eugene Conley (tenor) with the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede and Royalton Kisch. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-26). \$5.95.

Carmen—Air de fleur (Act II).

Faust—Salut! demeure (Act III).

Turandot—Non piangere, Liù! (Act I).

Martha—M'appari tutt' amor (Act III).

La Bohème—Che gelida manina (Act I).

La Favorita—Romanza: Spirto gentil (Act IV).

Rigoletto—Ballata: Questa o quella (Act I); La donna è mobile (Act III).

La Tosca—Recondita armonia (Act I); E Lucevan le stelle (Act III).

An Operatic Recital. Dusan Georgevic (tenor) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-79). \$4.95.

Pagliacci—Serenata: O Colombina (Act I).

La Traviata—De' miei bollenti spiriti (Act II).

L'Elisir d'Amore—Una furtiva lagrima (Act II).

Cavalleria Rusticana—Siciliana: O Lola.

Sadko—Song of the Indian Guest.

Manon—Le Rêve: C'est vrai! (Act II).

Two tenors make their recording debuts this month with operatic recitals on LP records: Eugene Conley and Dusan Georgevic. Mr. Conley, an American lirico spinto tenor, goes to the Metropolitan this year with his fine voice and a barrage of altitudinous notes that will undoubtedly win him a big following in our chief opera house. A solid success at La Scala, Milan, after batting around the U.S. in various minor opera companies, won Mr. Conley his coming contract.

Mr. Conley offers ten arias in his recital. With one exception—the aria from Puccini's *Turandot*—they are the life-blood of the tenor repertoire—*Tosca*, *Bohème*, *Martha*, *Faust*, *Carmen*, and *Rigoletto*. Mr. Conley offers fine, straightforward performances of these well-known arias, and his various high C's and B's are taken adroitly and are well sustained. The voice has a pleasing, manly quality, even though the singer is hardly yet a distinguished stylist. His renditions are conventional from this angle, and his French diction, especially in the *Flower Song* from *Carmen*, is filled with inaccuracies in the vowel sounds. Nevertheless, Mr. Conley, surely one of the most promising young tenors before the public today, is a welcome addition to the long line of the brotherhood,

who have recorded from the days of Caruso and Bonci, de Lucia and Tamagno, to the present.

Mr. Georgevic, who must remain a man of mystery for nothing is told about him, is obviously a singer of Balkan nationality. He offers six arias from the strictly lyric tenor repertoire. His voice is charming, and he sings with taste and feeling. The famous *Chanson Indoue* from *Sadko* is sung in the original Russian text, while *Le Rêve* from *Manon* is presented in French, and pretty awful French at that. The other four arias are sung in excellent Italian.

Mr. Georgevic achieves an appropriate and delightful intimacy in the *Dei miei bollenti spiriti* from *Traviata*, a quality that is 98% of the time missing in performances of this aria. His *Una furtiva lagrima* from *L'Elisir d'Amore* is also an achievement of considerable interest and distinction. There is tonal beauty and nuance in this tenor's work.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Wagner: Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg—Wahn-monolog: Wahn! Wahn! Uberall Wahn (Act III). (Sung in German). Paul Schoeffler (bass-baritone) with the National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Karl Rankl. 1-12" disc (L-T-5159). \$2.10.

Paul Schoeffler gives us an excellent recording of Hans Sachs' famous monologue from the first scene of Act III of *Die Meistersinger*, in which the philosophical cobbler laments the fact that everyone has gone mad. Collectors of Wagnerian recordings will very likely be highly pleased with this *ffff* disc.

VOCAL



Sullivan: H. M. S. Pinafore. Soloists and Chorus of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and the New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Isadore Godfrey. Available on LP Microgroove only, 2-12" discs in folder (L-LLP-71/72) (automatic sequence). \$11.90.

Sullivan: Pirates of Penzance. Soloists and Chorus of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and the New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Isadore Godfrey. Available on LP Microgroove only, 2-12" discs in folder (L-LLP-80/81) (automatic sequence). \$11.90.

If any further proof is necessary of the importance of LP recordings, certainly to find these two popular Gilbert and Sullivan operettas each contained on two LP discs in automatic sequence should be enough. It is not only the saving in dollars and cents, but the convenience of hearing them with few breaks and the great saving of storage space, that adds to the desirability of LP discs. We may place either of these sets on our automatic phonograph and comfortably seat ourselves for three-quarters of an hour

and enjoy the performance. Then, just as would happen at the theatre, we have an intermission; we stretch our legs, turn over the two discs and return to our seats for the balance of the performance. We think that that is the ideal way to enjoy a recorded version of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta.

We found both of these recordings highly satisfactory and the reproduction in both cases is very good. Perhaps the female singers are not quite as good as the male singers, and perhaps the chorus work is not as clear-cut as it might be, but on the whole we believe that the vast majority of G & S fans will enjoy and will wish to own both of these sets.

Chopin: The Maiden's Wish, Op. 74, No. 1 and **Chopin: My Joys, Op. 74, No. 12.** One side, and **Chopin: Melancholie, Op. 74, No. 13.** (Sung in Polish). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by George Reeves (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72870D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-325). 95¢.

Miss Tourel has selected three of the seventeen Polish Songs that make up Opus 74 for this unusual disc. We say unusual, because, as far as we have been able to learn, this is the first time that any of them have been recorded in their original form. Liszt arranged some of them for pianoforte and several pianists have supplied recordings of a few of them in such arrangements. Perhaps, if we understood Polish, these little songs would mean more to us, but as we don't, they held little charm for this listener. We suggest that unless you are familiar with these songs, you listen to this record before you purchase it.

Licia Albanese in Song. Licia Albanese (soprano) accompanied by Victor Trucco (piano). 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1316, \$4.

A miniature recital of six songs presented by RCA Victor this month will do nothing to enhance the reputation of Licia Albanese as a singer of charm and distinction. The records find this usually appealing singer in poor form. The soprano's voice sounds thin and uncertain, and her musicianship is halting and lacking in the authority of so important a singer. In fact, it all sounds rather amateurish.

The two Italian classics, *Amarilli* and *Se Florindo* are presented in brittle fashion, while Liszt's *Oh, Quand Je Dors* lacks pianissimi that are called for by the text. Miss Albanese could have studied an old record by Emmy Destinn to advantage.

Campbell-Tipton's *A Spirit Flower* is sung with intensity and soaring high notes, but here again, a final soft tone would have been more than desirable. Szulc's *Clair de Lune* has received far more atmospheric treatment by Mary Garden, Maggie Teyte, and, above all, by Melba. Miss Albanese exhibits little feeling as she adorns Szulc's song with some pretty tones. Perhaps a *Lullaby* by Tschaikovsky, sung in English, fares best.

The general impression, however, is tentative, and finds a soprano who has deserved many a brilliant triumph in opera, uncertain and rather exposed vocally in a medium in which she is obviously not too much at ease.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Songs of Haydn and Mozart. Earl Rogers (tenor) accompanied by Emilia Mitrani (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-13). \$3.85.

Haydn: *Das Leben ist ein Traum*
Heller Blick
She Never Told Her Love
Englisches Matrosenlied

Mozart: *An Chloe*, K. 524
Warnung, K 433
Abendempfindung
Die Zufriedenheit

Neither Haydn nor Mozart devoted much of their time to lieder, but judging from the charming songs to be found on this disc, they would have been very successful in that field if they had been so inclined. Several of these songs were new to us and we certainly enjoyed the opportunity of hearing them. Earl Rogers, who is well-known because of his numerous radio appearances, sings them in a most artistic and sympathetic manner, and we believe that lovers of lieder will be very much pleased with this record. All of the selections, except *She Never Told Her Love*, which is sung in English, are sung in German. Emilia Mitrani supplies appropriate piano accompaniments and the recording has been very successfully accomplished.

Chopin: *Mélancolie* (based on Etude No. 3 in E, Op. 10, No. 3). One side, and Dougherty: *Love in the Dictionary*. Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by William Hughes (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1485). \$1.05.

We can't get very much excited about this one. The Chopin song with words by Miss Thebom is passable. *Love in the Dictionary* with definitions taken directly from Funk and Wagnall Student's Standard Dictionary may be clever, but as a song it seemed to us rather silly and pointless. We surely think that Miss Thebom could record better material than the two selections she choose for the present disc.

Schubert: *Der Lindenbaum* (from "Die Winterreise, Op. 89"). One side, and Schubert: *Die Post* (from "Die Winterreise, Op. 89"). (Sung in German). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) accompanied by Sebastian Peschko (piano). 1-12" disc (L-T-5160). \$2.10.

It has been a long time since we have heard a new recording by the celebrated German baritone, Heinrich Schlusnus, and so this disc should be of particular interest to all those who are making a collection of recorded lieder. Mr. Schlusnus sings these well-known

Schubert selections with a fine sense of the text and in a manner that will surely please those who appreciate tradition.

Rimsky-Korsakov: *The Rose and the Nightingale*, Op. 2, No. 2. (Sung in Russian). One side, and Rachmaninoff: *Vocalise*, Op. 34, No. 14. Lily Pons (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 1-12" disc (C-72753D). \$1.05. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-241). 95¢.

Miss Pons has sung both of these songs many times in concerts; doubtless her admirers are familiar with them and many will probably wish to own a recording of them. We can state that they are beautifully sung and the recording has been very successfully achieved.

Leoncavallo: *Mattinata*. One side, and Di Capua: *O Sole Mio*. (Sung in Italian). Richard Tucker (tenor) with instrumental ensemble. 1-10" disc (C-17601D). 89¢. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-359). 95¢.

Richard Tucker of the Metropolitan sings these two well-known Italian ballads in nice style with an appropriate instrumental accompaniment. Well recorded.

HARPSICHORD



Kuhnau: *The Combat Between David and Goliath* and Kuhnau: *Toccata*. One side, and Luebeck: *Praeludium and Fugue in A minor* and Luebeck: *Suite in G minor* and Luebeck: *Praeludium ex D and Ciacconne*. Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-AL-15). \$4.85.

Johann Kuhnau (1660-1722) was one of the most important German clavier composers before Bach. He was the organist and cantor at St. Thomas' at Leipzig for many years. He is remembered principally for his *The Combat Between David and Goliath*, one of the oldest examples of program music we know of. It is surely unique and interesting. As one listens to it, one cannot help marveling at the skill the composer shows in making the harpsichord, with its strict limits, a descriptive instrument. Also great credit must be given the performer. In the present instance, Mme. Weiss-Mann leaves nothing to be desired. We played this selection over and over again just for the sheer joy that her remarkable performance gave us. Those interested in the harpsichord should not miss hearing this unusual recording.

If Vincent Luebeck (1654-1740) had not been a contemporary of the mighty Bach, his works would be better known today. Bach unquestionably overshadowed him. He was, however, a great and inspired composer in his own right, and it is a real pleasure to hear some of his compositions for the harpsichord—especially when they are so artistically presented

as they are on this disc by the distinguished harpsichordist, Edith Weiss-Mann.

This excellent LP disc is worthy of investigation by all discerning music lovers. R.

Byrd: Lulla. One side, and **Byrd: Galiard.** Isabelle Nef (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (OL-76). \$1.60.

Two lovely little pieces from the days of Good Queen Bess by the English composer, William Byrd—beautifully played by the talented harpsichordist, Isabelle Nef. A charming disc for the discerning collector of music of another day.

Keyboard Music of the Baroque Period. Edith Weiss-Mann (harpsichord). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-LA-3). \$4.85.

The distinguished harpsichordist, Edith Weiss-Mann, has splendidly recorded a number of selections drawn from the works of a series of 17th century composers. Representative compositions of the following will be found on this unique disc: Georg Philippe Telemann (1661-1767); Jean Philippe Rameau (1683-1764); Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643); Ercole Pasquini (organist at St. Peter's, Rome in 1597); Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654); Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706); Georg Boehm (1661-1733); Georg Kauffman (dates unknown); and Ferdinand Tobias Richter (1649-1711).

Those collectors who are interested in harpsichord recordings, especially those interested in music of the "Baroque Period," will find this disc of supreme value. The reproduction is excellent throughout.

PIANO



Chopin: Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58. One side, and **Chopin: Nocturne No. 8 in D-flat, Op. 27, No. 2** and **Chopin: Polonaise No. 7 in A-flat, Op. 61** ("Fantasie Polonaise"). Jacques Abram (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-AL-12). \$4.85.

The present disc gives music lovers an opportunity to hear the American pianist, Jacques Abram, play Chopin. Mr. Abram has selected three Chopin pieces and we feel sure that his playing of them will indicate that he rates with the best pianists of the day. Those interested in outstanding piano recordings should not fail to investigate this record. The reproduction is particularly fine.

Jacques Abram was born in Texas and began the serious study of music at the age of six. One of his first teachers was Arthur Shattuck. Later he held fellowships at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia under David Saperton and Josef Hofmann and at the Juilliard Graduate School under Ernest Hutchinson. In 1938 he made his debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the following year his concert debut at Town Hall in New York. Since that time, except for the war years when he was in the service, he has made numerous concert tours and has appeared with

most of the major symphony orchestras of this country. Mr. Abram is a brilliant young artist and is continually growing in stature.

Chopin: Barcarolle in F-sharp minor, Op. 60. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72832D). \$1.05.

Columbia has decided to issue this selection as a single record. We reviewed the album, *A Chopin Recital*, from which this disc is taken, in our September issue. We might mention in passing that *A Chopin Recital* is now available on LP, coupled with Beethoven's *Pastorale Sonata* by Sandor (ML-4193).

MISCELLANEOUS



Music of the Gothic Period and the Early Renaissance. The Vielle Trio: Franz Siedersbeck and Beatrice Dohme (alto-vielle) and Werner Landschoff (tenor-vielle), with Du Bose Robertson (tenor). Available on LP Microgroove only, 2-12" discs in folder (AL-AL-14). \$9.70.

A whole book might be written about this pair of discs containing music of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. Space only permits us to indicate what these records contain with the hope that those interested in music of this period will investigate them for themselves.

The stringed instruments of the Middle Ages, the vielles, were predecessors of the chest of viols, which in turn were the antecedents of the present day violin family. Vielles first appeared about 900 A. D. and were used until the 16th century. Their shape is more primitive than later instruments, and the tone thinner because of the lack of sound post and bass bar. They correspond to the different ranges of the human voice: Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Contra-Tenor. Their name in English was fytel or fiddle, fidula in Latin, and vielle in French.

The Vielle Trio was founded some twenty years ago in Munich by American born Beatrice Dohme under the name of the Fiedel Trio, after the German designation of the ancient instruments it played, and gave concerts before World War II all over Europe. It was reorganized in 1947 and has since toured throughout the United States. It is said to be the only ensemble in this country specializing in interpretations of the music of the Gothic Age and the Renaissance, playing it on instruments used during that time.

The present records contain eighteen selections: some of them are purely instrumental and in others a tenor voice is added. In listening to the pieces with tenor voice, one should realize that the voice is just another part of the harmony—in no case is it a solo with string accompaniment.

We hope that we have given enough information to whet the appetites of those music lovers who are interested in music and instruments of another age. Brief notes on each of the eighteen selections are supplied with this pair of discs.

R.

Couperin: *Le Rossignol en Amour*. One side, and Cosyns: *The Goldfinch and Farnaby: Woody Cock and Mundy: Robin*. Carl Dolmetsch (recorder) and Joseph Saxby (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (L-R-10105). \$1.05.

Farnaby: *Tower Hill and Heartease* (Anon.) and *The King's Morisco* (Anon.). One side, and Purcell: *Divisions on a Ground Bass*. Carl Dolmetsch (recorder) and Joseph Saxby (harpsichord). 1-10" disc (L-R-10106). \$1.05.

The above recordings are contained on a single LP disc (L-LPS-24), which was reviewed in our October 1949 issue.

ORGAN

Bach: *A German Organ Mass* (Third Part of the *Clavierübung*). Fritz Heitmann, playing the organ at Charlottenburg Palace, Berlin. 6-12" discs in album. Capitol-Telefunken Set EFL-8029. \$9.19. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8029). \$4.85.

Anyone who owns any organ records, other than popular, and particularly any Biggs records, will not want to miss this choice release. The organ itself is of great interest. It is an Arp Schnitger, built in 1706, when Frederick the First of Prussia commissioned his Court Architect, Johann Friedrich von Eosander, to add a new wing and chapel to his residence. It is an excellent example of the type of organ in use in Bach's time, and is what we call today a Baroque organ, except that it has a far more pleasing tone and less squeal than our so-called Baroque organs. There is a sweetness in the small pipes, at the upper end of the registers, which our Baroques lack, due partly to our use of octave couplers. The Chapel's acoustics and Telefunken's skill result in a beautiful recording.

Bach conceived the idea of expressing in the language of tones the inner meaning of Luther's catechism. Using as a basis five hymns, he constructed an Organ Mass, the spirit and meaning of the texts being explored and illuminated through musical contemplations in the form of chorale-preludes. Several of his greatest chorale-preludes are found in this Mass, surrounded by the "St. Anne" prelude and fugue, serving as introduction and closing section.

Fritz Heitmann is a great organist, and his performance here will command respect, for it is superlative. His phrasing is notable, and the Mass as a whole has style. This is certainly one of the most important, as well as one of the finest, organ releases ever to come our way.

S.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian, I—Inst. of America, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, O—Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunk, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

John McCormick. By L. A. G. Strong. x + 309 pp. Illustrated. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$3.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Victor Book of Symphonies. (Revised edition). By Charles O'Connell. xiii + 556 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 10

DECEMBER, 1949

By mail to any address
50¢ per year

The Wagner Operas. By Ernest Newman. xii+724+v pp. Frontispiece and 550 musical examples. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.85.

Although Mr. Newman has written several books on Wagner, including the four-volume *The Life of Richard Wagner*, the present work is entirely new from cover to cover. The author states in his introduction that so much new material has been found in recent years that a new book on Wagner's operas is in order. In our opinion, no one is better qualified to write that book than the celebrated Wagnerian authority, the distinguished English music critic, Ernest Newman.

Mr. Newman begins his book with the consideration of *The Flying Dutchman*, omitting *Die Feen*, *Das Liebesverbot* and *Rienzi* for the reason that those three operas are practically unknown to the present generation; the chances of ever seeing a performance of any of them is very remote, to say the least. As the author states, his main object is to help the opera-goer to see the operas as nearly as possible as Wagner must have seen them in his mind's eye when he wrote them. Mr. Newman points out quite correctly that it is impossible to find singers with the proper musical equipment who resemble at all accurately the characters they are supposed to represent, and further, that it is not possible to stage realistically the vast and intricate action of the plots. One must rely upon his imagination to appreciate fully much that is merely indicated upon the stage. That is where Mr. Newman's book is of supreme value.

If a music lover will carefully read the chapter devoted to a given opera before he sees it or listens to it on the radio, he will certainly gain much that will lead him to a

fuller understanding and enjoyment of it. While the motives of the several works are indicated by musical examples, Mr. Newman does not overdo it, and so his always interesting and often witty prose is not unduly interrupted; it flows along pleasantly. Although recordings are not mentioned in this book, collectors of Wagnerian records should find Mr. Newman's opus of real interest and of great value.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of *THE NEW RECORDS*. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Berlioz: *Requiem*. George Jouatte (tenor) with Emile Passani Choir and Orch.—Fournet. 2-12" discs (C-SL-159) (automatic sequence). \$9.70. (TNR Nov. '48).

Stethoscopic Heart Records (revised). Ed. by George D. Geckeler, M. D. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4240). \$4.85. (TNR June '48).

Musical Comedy Favorites. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orch. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4241). \$4.85. (TNR Jan. '41, May '42, & Feb. '45).

Gould: *Interplay for Piano and Orchestra*. Morton Gould (piano) with Robin Hood Dell Orch. One side, and *Music of Morton Gould*. Robin Hood Dell Orch.—Gould. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4218). \$4.85. (TNR Feb. '48 & May '47).

Smetana: *The Moldau*. Philharmonic-Symphony Orch. of N. Y.—Walter. One side, and Brahms: *Akademische Festouvertüre*, Op. 80. Philharmonic-Symphony Orch. of N. Y.—Barbirolli. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2075). \$3.85. (TNR Dec. '41 & Aug. '41).

Ezio Pinza in Operatic Arias. Ezio Pinza (bass) with Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orch.—Cleva. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2060). \$3.85. (Formerly all single discs; see TNR May '47, July '48, and June & Oct. '49).

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica")*. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orch.—Mengelberg. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8002). \$4.85. (TNR May '49).

Bruckner: *Mass in E minor*. Hamburg State Opera Choir and Orch.—Thurn. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8004). \$4.85. (TNR May '49).

Lehar Operettas (excerpts). Soloists, Chorus, and Orch. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8033). \$4.85. (TNR May '49).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 55 ("Eroica")*. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 6-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-858. \$8.50. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4228). \$4.85.

The reason for this recording is very probably the same as the reason for Columbia's release last month of the *Gaïté Parisienne*. In both cases they had splendid sets that were selling well, and now they issue new recordings by the same conductor (and in this instance by the same orchestra). The reason is that the older versions would not transfer well to the new Long Playing records. So we are favored with new modern reproductions of the great interpretations that have proved so fine in the past, and in turn to well-made LP discs.

The Walter recording (previously Col. MM-449) was loved by many for its uncanny warmth, breadth, heartfelt reading, and its almost careless abandon fused into a marvelous orchestra performance. The new set is just that, even better orchestral playing, a little tighter reading (which it could stand), and a magnificent reproduction. There is still that virtuoso conducting which borders at times on abandon, for lack of a better word, that is in no sense sloppy playing, but which gives a tremendous thrill and adds to the expansive character of the music itself and its resultant performance. It is hard to explain, but a joy to hear, and few but Bruno Walter can do it.

Koussevitzky's recent *Eroica* (Vic. DM-1161), which we reviewed in December 1947, was one of his noblest efforts, highly charged with emotion and dramatic impact. To all of us the *Eroica* is an important work, and before acquiring it, we should listen to two or three of the best versions. It is now narrowed down to Koussevitzky and the new Bruno Walter set, either of which is 24 karat. S.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36*. Nine sides, and Tchaikovsky: *Serenade in C major, Op. 48—Waltz*. Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1318. \$7.25.

Koussevitzky is considered a dynamic interpreter of Tchaikovsky, and in the concert hall this is un-

doubtedly true. Paradoxically, on records it is not so true, for the interpretation and performance must stand on their own merit when heard through a phonograph, while in the concert hall the visual effect of the conductor helps to put over some of his erratic ideas to the concert-goer. While listening to some recorded performances by conductors whom we have seen in person perform the same works, this fact is very apparent.

The present performance will probably suit many persons, although we are sure they would vastly prefer Ormandy's recent set if they took time to hear them both. Ormandy does a nice even, straight job, unusually dramatic and fiery, but completely sane and reasonable. It is one of his best phonographic efforts, and it received exceptionally fine reproduction (Col. MM-736) (reviewed in May 1948). Koussevitzky has his moments, and some of them are magnificent; but the reading as a whole is uneven, some parts are pushed, rushed, and glossed over, probably in an effort to set off the forthcoming climax with even greater impact. The reproduction is bold and brassy and revealing, and is an advance on Victor's part in higher fidelity recording. Who knows, some day we may catch up to England's present standard? The high fidelity angle, in this set, is distinctly overdone in the last movement, which is full of cymbal crashes, and which in this case, has little more than these crashes, for they blanket the orchestral chords. This is particularly true on a high fidelity reproducer which will deliver the upper partials of a cymbal. With this exception the reproduction is thrilling.

S.

Dopper: *Gothic Chaconne*. Five sides, and Röntgen: *Old Netherland Dances, Op. 46*—Bergerette; Pavane. Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set ECL-8031. \$5.25. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with Pfitzner: *Palestrina*—Preludes to Acts I, II, and III. German Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Joseph Keilberth. 1-12" disc (CL-P-8037). \$4.85.

Cornelius Dopper was born in Holland in 1870. He studied at Leipzig Conservatory and afterwards conducted operas in his native land. From 1906 until 1908 he traveled in the U.S.A. as one of the conductors of Henry W. Savage's English Opera Company. In 1908 he became assistant to Willem Mengelberg with the Concertgebouw Orchestra and remained in that position until 1931. He wrote four operas, eight symphonies, concertos, choral pieces and numerous songs.

The present work, one of Dopper's most successful compositions, dates from 1920. *Ciaconna Gotica* (Gothic Chaconne) was first performed at Amsterdam by the orchestra that made the present recording on 24 October of the year it was completed. Its first American performance was by the Philadelphia

Orchestra on 19 February 1926 with Stokowski conducting. On that occasion this reviewer heard it for the first and only time.

Dopper's *Chaconne* is a series of symphonic variations on a short, original theme. It is largely a rather somber work with melancholy, although not unattractive, melodies that have a haunting tang. It is easy to appreciate and we would not be surprised if this album enjoyed a reasonably wide sale. It should appeal to those collectors who are always interested in good music that is new to them.

The filler on the last side of the discs in this album contains a lovely little selection by the pianist and composer, Julius Röntgen. Röntgen was born in Leipzig in 1855 and died at Utrecht in 1932. His son, Englebert, is well-known in the U.S.A. as a conductor and violoncellist. He founded the Omaha Symphony Orchestra in 1920 and conducted it until 1930 when he came to the Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra as first 'cellist. As his father's music is practically unknown in this country, the present selection will doubtless be new to most of our readers.

R.

Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2—Toccata: Little Train of the Caipira; Aria: On a Song of Our Country. Janssen Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Janssen. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80151). \$1.32. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Villa-Lobos: Choros No. 10.** 1-10" disc (CL-L-8043). \$3.85.

Villa-Lobos: Choros No. 10 ("Rasga o Coração"). Janssen Symphony Orchestra conducted by Werner Janssen, with the Los Angeles Oratorio Society. 2-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EBL-8042. \$3.94. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Villa-Lobos: Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2—Toccata; Aria.** 1-10" disc (CL-L-8043). \$3.85.

The selections in both of these albums are based on Villa-Lobos' native Brazil and seem to come from deep down in the soil of that interesting country. The *Little Train of the Caipira* is a descriptive piece giving a musical picture of a little narrow-gauge train running through the fields and forests of the countryside. The aria *On a Song of Our Country* is an interesting orchestral arrangement of a folksong with the tenor saxophone rather representing a voice.

Choros No. 10 is one of a series of fourteen selections to which Villa-Lobos gave the title "Choros." On the fly-leaf of the score the composer wrote the following interesting note:

"The Choros represents a new form of musical composition, in which are synthesized different modalities of Brazilian, Indian and popular music having for principal elements Rhythm and any typical Melody of popular character. . . ."

The present selection, *Choros No. 10*, is written for a large orchestra augmented with a number of unusual native instruments (a glass bottle partly

filled with small stones, a rachet stick and several wooden and metal rattles) to which is added a mixed chorus. The chorus intones a Brazilian popular song entitled *Rasga o Coração*.

All of this Villa-Lobos music will sound strange to uninitiated ears and caution should be exercised by those who are not familiar with the works of this composer. Better listen before you buy.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C major (B. & H. No. 7). Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. Thirteen sides, and **Beethoven: Deutsche Tanze No. 12.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. 7-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EGL-8039. \$10.50. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8040). \$4.85.

With Capitol making available this month the Telefunken recording of Schubert's *Ninth* by Mengelberg and the Concertgebouw Orchestra, American record collectors have the three recorded versions of this truly great masterpiece that are worthy of consideration.

Briefly, the Toscanini-NBC Symphony version (Vic. DM-1167) is probably the most popular one, although some critics seem to feel that Toscanini in his aim to make it a perfect performance has missed the inner mysteries of Schubert's score—musical perfection without a soul. The Bruno Walter-Philharmonic-Symphony version (Col. MM-679) has the advantage of Walter's affection for, and deep understanding of, Schubert's magnificent music. However, he has his own individual conception of how this symphony should be played and all music lovers do not agree with him. Now along comes the Mengelberg-Concertgebouw version—is it a happy medium? Does Mengelberg etch the details of this music clearly enough and yet produce that warmth and sentiment that is the very heart of Schubert's superb score? That is a question that every music lover must answer for himself. We rather feel that Mengelberg comes very close to doing it.

As all three of the recordings, which we have been considering, should be available in any classical record shop, a discerning collector might spend a pleasant and profitable hour or so making his own comparison.

R. Strauss: Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 38. Cleveland Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-327. \$3.50. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20.** Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2079). \$3.85.

Many recordings of this jolly work have been made; the best one in our opinion is the RCA Victor version by Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony. The second best is the present album. There may be those who feel that Szell gets more humor from the

music but considering all angles we favor the Koussevitzky-Boston recording.

Few persons know the meaning of *Eulenspiegel*. Its translation is "owl's glass," or "owl's mirror," and its origin is found in an old German proverb: "Man is as little conscious of his own faults as an ape or an owl, looking into a mirror, is conscious of his ugliness." These facts (which we learned from the program notes of the late Lawrence Gilman) always amuse us greatly; as does the actual title Strauss gave this composition, which translated, in the vernacular, is "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks, set in the Old-time Roguish manner—in Rondo form—for Full Orchestra." There is nothing else in music so charmingly humorous as *Till Eulenspiegel*.

Respighi: Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto—Suite No. 1. EIAR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sergio Failoni. One side, and **Respighi: Gli Uccelli.** EIAR Symphony Orchestra conducted by Willy Ferrero. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (CE-40,003). \$4.75.

The first item is the first of three suites that Respighi wrote for orchestra based on dances and airs composed by 16th and 17th century Italian and French lutenists. It had its first performance in 1921 when Toscanini brought the La Scala Orchestra to this country for an extensive concert tour. It abounds in lovely melodies of another era and is easy to enjoy upon first hearing.

The reverse side of this disc contains a very satisfactory performance of *Gli Uccelli* (The Birds) which was introduced to American audiences by Fritz Reiner and the Cincinnati Orchestra in 1928. It is not a work of great moment but the music is piquant and clever and occasionally amusing. Respighi's well-known skill at devising effective orchestrations stands him in good stead in this instance.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in F major. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major.** Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6180). \$4.85.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major.** Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-VLP-6200). \$4.85.

Perhaps we expected too much when we noted that these Brandenburg Concertos were recorded by Otto Klemperer. He is one of our favorite conductors but we must say that we were greatly disappointed when we listened to these discs. The reproduction is nothing to boast of and for some reason Klemperer overaccentuates the rhythm. At times this lovely music, instead of flowing along nicely, seems to move forward in a series of little jerks. The conductor gives the impression that he is concentrating on each bar of music rather than considering it as a whole. One might say that these are very fussy performances.

When we compare them with the Adolf Busch recordings on Columbia records, they just do not rate.

Glinka Selections. Symphony Orchestra of the Academy of St. Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. 4-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EDL-8044. \$6.57. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (CL-P-8044). \$4.85.

Russlan and Ludmilla—Overture.

Kamarinskaya.

Valse-Fantasie.

Jota Aragonesa.

These days we don't hear much of the music of Michael Glinka (1803-57), the so-called founder of the Russian national school of composers. Thus, this set of discs will give all of those persons who are interested a fine opportunity to listen to a variety of his works. Much of his music is based on the folk melodies of his country and breathes with the atmosphere of the Russian countryside of the Czars. It is quite pleasing and easy to listen to. Rachmilovich is highly qualified to give sympathetic renditions of these selections and the reproduction throughout is excellent.

Easdale: The Red Shoes. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Muir Mathieson. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-328. \$3.50. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Lambert: Horoscope** (Ballet Suite). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2083). \$3.85.

Many persons among the thousands who have seen and enjoyed the English film *Red Shoes* will doubtless be interested in securing this fine recording of the music from this outstanding motion picture. The film has been shown at one theatre in New York for over a year. The score is from the pen of the gifted British composer, Brian Easdale, who supplied the music for another famous English film, *Black Narcissus*.

Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45. Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by J. Kerekes. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33.** Dmitry Markevitch (violoncello) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (VX-PLP-6640). \$3.85.

For a review of this disc, see under **VIOLONCELLO**.

R. Strauss: Salome, Op. 54—Salomes Tanz der sieben Schleier. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80152). \$1.32. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **R. Strauss: Salome, Op. 54—Final Scene.** Liselotte Enck (soprano) with Berlin State Opera House Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 1-10" disc (CL-L-8036). \$3.85.

Capitol makes available this month the Telefunken recording of *Salome's Dance of the Seven Veils* by

the Vienna Philharmonic conducted by Clemens Krauss. It is a splendid rendition and rates well with any of the several other available recordings. We have always particularly liked the Rodzinski-Cleveland Orchestra version (C-11781-D) but we would not be surprised if many music lovers preferred Herr Krauss' recording.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Haydn: Quartet in B-flat major, Op. 76, No. 4 ("Sunrise"). Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-864. \$4.75. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Haydn: Quartet in D Major, Op. 64, No. 5 ("Lark")**. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4216). \$4.85.

In October Columbia issued its album (MM-853) containing the Budapest recording of Haydn's *Quartet in D major, Op. 64, No. 5 ("Lark")* and it was greeted with acclaim by chamber music lovers everywhere. This month another of Haydn's lovely works in the same form is made available. We are sure that a hearty welcome awaits this new release. The "Sunrise" Quartet was recorded previously by the Pro Arte Quartet and is contained in the eighth volume of The Haydn Quartet Society (Vic. Set DM-595). We are sure that most music lovers will prefer the Budapest Quartet version. We cannot imagine a finer performance than these sterling players present in the album issued this month.

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 25 in C major, K. 503. Gaby Casadesus (piano) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6520). \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 21 in C major, K. 467. Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Charles Münch. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-866. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2067). \$3.85.

Here is an interesting pair of discs—two Mozart concerti, both late ones in C major, one played by the wife, the other by the husband, and each of these French artists has a French conductor for collaborator. The results in both cases are highly gratifying. We will not be drawn into any family comparisons, or run the chance of "starting something" between these renowned artists. They both do fine work, and each has a reputation as a Mozart performer of unusual understanding. Gaby chose the more difficult concerto, for the K. 503 has a Rondo last movement which is an almost continuous span of sixteenth triplets, making virtuoso demands on the right hand. The K. 503 is an infrequently performed concerto, for no explainable reason. It is a great work, one of

Mozart's finest, and a nearly perfect example of classical concerto form, said to be superior in that respect even to Beethoven's. This set should appeal greatly to the concerto collector and the Mozart collector. It is given a reading of proper power and authority by soloist and orchestra, and is well reproduced, as are all the Vox LP series.

Robert and Münch with the New York Philharmonic offer a cleanly played and carefully styled performance of the K. 467, not in any sense a simple work, either. It is a display concerto with some unusual (for its day) harmonic devices. It is, to us, a more melodious piece than the K. 503, the final movement radiantly bright and happy. Any classical record collector will find it completely enjoyable; the reproduction is roomy and of fine timbre. Gaby and Robert have given us a pair of cherishable recordings of high merit, which happily will enhance the name of Mozart as well as the name of Casadesus. S.

Medtner Society Set (Vol. III). Concerto No. 1 in C minor, Op. 33. Nicolas Medtner (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. Nine sides, and *The Ravens*, Op. 52, No. 2 and *Serenade*, Op. 28, No. 2. (Sung in Russian). Oda Slobodskaya (soprano) accompanied by Nicolas Medtner (piano). One side, and *Canzona Matinata*, Op. 39, No. 4. One side, and *Sonata Tragica*, Op. 39, No. 5. Nicolas Medtner (piano). 7-12" discs in album (V-DB-9379 to V-DB-9385) (automatic sequence). \$18.38.

The first volume of the Medtner Society received a very warm welcome in these columns; the second volume seemed enjoyable also. Now that we have heard the latest issue in the series, Volume Three, we cannot help feeling a lack of interest in this portion of Medtner's work. It is to be assumed that some of the best material would be placed in the initial volume, and it was most pleasant music. The principal work in the present set, *Concerto No. 1* is rather diffuse, being in one movement, and cannot boast thematic material of very important substance. As in all of Medtner's writings, the piano has a busy and important role; in this concerto it is working about ninety per cent of the time. The construction and workmanship are good, but after hearing the piece, one does not have a concrete and satisfactory impression. This feeling is changed a bit if the elaborate program notes, in the accompanying twelve-page booklet, are studied. This can lead to the conclusion that the work cannot stand on its own feet without some "selling" by the annotator, or that we are not smart enough to comprehend the work. We therefore recommend the reader to hear this set before acquiring it only on the basis of a review.

Medtner, at 70, performs the concerto with the dash and drive of a virtuoso half his age; and gives the orchestra quite a run for its money—the orchestra losing by a narrow margin. The reproduction is satisfactory. The two piano solos are part of a cycle

of eighteen pieces "Forgotten Themes," a rather interesting affair based on a poem of Lermontov. *Canzona* is attractive music, the one movement *Sonata Tragica*, on three record sides, is more involved and difficult to appreciate. The inclusion of a pair of songs on one of the record sides, would have been better if saved for an album of his vocal works. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto in D major, Op. 35. Isaac Stern (violin) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Alexander Hilsberg. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-863. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4232). \$4.85.

You will find much to recommend Stern's new recording of the Tchaikovsky Concerto. One thing not often encountered is an accompaniment conducted by another violin virtuoso. Alexander Hilsberg is concertmaster of the Philadelphia Orchestra as well as its assistant conductor, and is doing exceptionally distinguished work in both posts. So we have here an accompaniment as a violin soloist would wish it; it is therefore excellent and better than the accompaniment found on any other recorded performance of this work. The orchestra is notably well recorded, not distant yet not on top of the solo instrument; while the soloist gets every break possible by the recording—pure, clear, ringing tone, honest and not over amplified. In all it is a splendid reproduction.

Coming back to Isaac Stern, we find a fast-rising virtuoso whose performances are always dependable and not fussy nor mannered. In the present work, he plays with technical proficiency. His interpretation is built along conventional lines, no new ideas nor distortions. There is plenty of feeling and emotional power within this framework and at the proper time genuine excitement; all of this being aided and underscored by that good accompaniment.

In February 1948 we reviewed the Erica Morini-Desire Defauw recording of this work (Vic. DM-1168) and remarked about the rhapsodic, almost improvisational, and very individual and deeply felt interpretation which Miss Morini gave us. Morini and Stern are quite a study in contrast. We like to hear the Morini version occasionally, although Stern's set is better for a steady diet, and his playing is cleaner and more secure. S.

OPERA

Wagner: Siegfried—Act III, Scene 3 (complete). (Sung in German). Eileen Farrell (soprano) and Set Svanholm (tenor) with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1319. \$7.25.

This fine recording of the complete third scene of the final act of *Siegfried* was much needed, as our



record catalogs have been sorely amiss in their representation of this thrilling music. Up to the appearance of the issue in question there was nothing available of this music except a drastically cut and badly recorded version by Frida Leider and Rudolf Laubenthal.

A few years ago a very fine recording, with Florence Easton and Lauritz Melchior, adorned our catalogs, but this performance, for some reason hard to fathom, has been unavailable now for several years.

The present set, which enlists Eileen Farrell, Set Svanholm, and the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra under Eric Leinsdorf, begins with the exciting music as Siegfried ascends the flame-girdled mountain. It then occupies itself with Siegfried's gaining the mountain top, and his opening phrase, *Selige Ode auf sonniger Höh!* (*Haven of bliss on the mountainous height!*). There are no cuts, as the final high C of the tumultuous duet is reached.

Miss Farrell, who seems in line to succeed Helen Traubel as America's principal Wagnerian soprano, has a warm and beautiful voice which sounds well in this music. She does not quite match her extraordinary achievement of the *Five Songs* by Richard Wagner, which she recorded two years ago with Stokowski, but she makes you feel that with repeated public performances of this music she might easily become a great *Brünnhilde*. The ultimate poise which comes from multiple experience is somewhat lacking, and Miss Farrell's highest notes thin out just a bit, if compared to the impressive size of the rest of her voice. There is no denying the fact that this is a very great talent and a very exceptional vocal organ.

Set Svanholm is an old hand at Siegfried, though beauty of tone (such as Melchior possesses) is not his. There is a hard, brassy resonance to his tones, which often have the proper heroic thrust, but any sensuousness or subtlety of sound is absent. Mr. Svanholm does an admirable job, but he sounds like just a good German Wagnerian tenor.

Erich Leinsdorf's many years of connection with the Metropolitan's Wagnerian repertoire stands him in good stead. He offers a performance which is both exciting and authoritative. The Rochester group sounds fine.

Recording, like most of RCA's present output, is amazingly good. There are times when it is hard to believe one is not at an actual performance. Surfaces are all one could ask for. MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Verdi: La Traviata—*Lunge da lei per me non v'ha diletto!* (recit.): *De' miei bollenti spiriti* (Act II). One side, and **Massenet: Manon**—*Ah! dispar vision* (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Giussepe di Stefano (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6868). \$2.63.

NOTE: This disc was received too late for review this month. A review of it will appear in our January issue.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Eleanor Steber (soprano); Jean Madeira, Thelma Votipka (mezzo-sopranos); Richard Tucker, Alessio de Paolis (tenors); Giuseppe Valdengo, George Cehanovsky (baritones); Melchiorre Luise, John Baker (basses); and the Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Max Rudolf; with Kurt Adler, Chorus Master. 16-12" discs in 2 albums. Columbia Set MOP-30. \$22.77. Also available on LP Microgroove, 3-12" discs (C-SL-104) (automatic sequence). \$14.55.

Columbia's new *Madama Butterfly* is the fourth complete recording made of Puccini's popular opera. In the days of early electrical recording (orthophonic), Italian HMV issued a performance with Margaret Sheridan, Lionel Cecil, Ida Mannarini and Vittorio Weinberg. About the same time, Columbia countered with its version, enlisting Rosetta Pampolini, Alessandro Granda, Conchita Velasquez, and Gino Vanelli. Then in 1938, Italian HMV replaced its earlier set with a more up-to-date one sung by Toti Dal Monte, Beniamino Gigli, Vittoria Palombini and Mario Basiola.

The present recording was made early this year. It presents an all-Metropolitan cast, as well as enlisting the association's chorus, orchestra and conductor Max Rudolf. In fact, it is advertised as a Metropolitan Opera Association production.

Of the four recorded versions, this is by far the clearest and most lifelike. Puccini's superbly flowing orchestration never sounded more lovely or more transparent than it does here. Little effects in the orchestra, lost in the earlier recordings, are here clearly audible. The music seems to have gained added color and meaning.

Eleanor Steber proves an admirable choice in every way as the unfortunate Cio-Cio-San. Mme. Steber is now, probably, at the very height of her vocal powers, and these are considerable. Hers is a lovely, lyric soprano voice of extended range, placed at the disposal of a thorough musician and artist. The singer gives herself unstintedly to this music. She does not flinch from an optional and sustained high D-flat at the end of the *Entrance Song*, and her high C at the end of the duet is another fine climax. Particularly lovely is her voice in the phrase *Io seguo il mio destino* at the beginning of side 2 (LP), and in the exquisite little song, *Dormi, amor mio*, with its concluding high B pianissimo. Mme. Steber also shows herself an artist of temperament. She evidently feels what she is singing intensely. Columbia made a wonderfully good choice in a singer for this role, which can certainly make or break the performance.

Richard Tucker is the Pinkerton and an excellent one. His singing, never too subtle, is free and impassioned, and, after all, who ever claimed that Pinkerton was a subtle character. Mr. Tucker's part in the great love duet is admirably sung, though one

regrets his not taking the high C with the soprano at its close.

Giuseppe Valdengo is surely the best Sharpless on records; his diction and sense of situation are especially communicative. Jean Madeira has a dark, sonorous voice which is a bit on the heroic side for the music of Suzuki, but she adds unfailingly to the drama; so does the sly and evil-sounding Goro of that consummate singing-actor, Alessio De Paolis. Names familiar to followers of the Metropolitan—Thelma Votipka, George Cehanovsky, John Baker, Melchiorre Luise—adorn the rest of the cast.

Max Rudolf conducts with unflagging temperament and unfailing perception. This is the conductor's finest and most complete achievement on records.

The only faults to be found with a significant addition to the growing list of completely recorded operas are these: the inaudibility of the short but important part of the Bonze, where the singer, covered by the orchestra, was obviously too far from the microphone; the too loudly sung *Flower Duet*, which consequently, could have been much more poetic, and an impossibly noisy surface which succeeds in ruining the humming chorus at the end of the second act—of all places for such an undesirable state of affairs! Otherwise, surfaces and recording technique are excellent.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Puccini: Madama Butterfly—*Ancora un passo* (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: Madama Butterfly**—*Con onor muore* (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Victor Trucco. 1-12" disc (V-12-1001). \$1.31.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly—*Un bel di, vedremo* (Act II). One side, and **Puccini: La Rondine**—*Chi il bel sogno di Doretta* (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-0999). \$1.31.

Giordano: Andrea Chenier—*La mamma morta* (Act III). One side, and **Handel: Atalanta**—*Care selve*. (Sung in Italian). Florence Quartararo (soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-1000). \$1.31.

Massenet: Werther—*Air des lettres: Werther!* Qui m'aurait dit (Act III). (Sung in French). Gladys Swarathout (mezzo-soprano) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Jean Paul Morel. 1-12" disc (V-12-1002). \$1.31.

Records by three sopranos and a contralto, all well-known among present-day singers, are released by RCA Victor this month. Let us take them in alphabetical order.

Licia Albanese supplements her already fine recording of an abridged *Butterfly* album with Cio-Cio-San's Entrance and Final Song. The charm of this singer is ever present in these records, and the intensity of

tone is satisfying in an age where a shallower and less vibrant manner of singing is often favored. It is a pity that Mme. Albanese does not sing the high D-flat in the Entrance Song, a note she used to project so delightfully and glamorously in her early performances in this country. The drama of *Butterfly*'s final song to her child comes through quite superbly.

Butterfly is also favored by Dorothy Kirsten this month. Miss Kirsten offers a very communicative and impassioned singing of the *Un bel di vedremo*, showing that she has grown into the inner core of the role. The tones are sometimes overly bright to the point of sharpness, but Miss Kirsten gives a good account of herself in a performance which reminds one of the late Grace Moore. On the reverse is Miss Kirsten's most delightful record to date—the little aria from the first act of Puccini's *La Rondine*, when the heroine, Magda, is discovered seated at the piano. This is not the same aria that Lucrezia Bori recorded for Victor a few years ago. Miss Kirsten's high notes (including a top C) are delightfully clear, and the little aria has all that charm which Puccini, more than any operatic composer, seemed to possess.

Florence Quartararo, one of the Metropolitan's gifted younger sopranos, sings the widely contrasting *Care s'elve* by Handel, and *La mamma morta* from Giordano's *Andrea Chenier*, in which her tones have the bloom and velvet of youth. However, she has neither the nobility for the former aria, nor the sustained intensity for the latter. Lovely sounds, but something seems lacking.

And finally we come to Gladys Swarthout, who gives us an excerpt from that long-neglected and lovely opera of Massenet—*Werther*. Mme. Swarthout's voice sounds in fine condition, and she does some beautiful singing of an instrumental clarity. Somehow, the scene, as she presents it, lacks a tension that others (notably Alice Raveau and Ninon Vallin) have succeeded in giving it.

Victor Trucco conducts for Mme. Albanese, while Jean Paul Morel is at the helm for the Mmes. Kirsten, Quartararo and Swarthout. These records seem yet another step forward in clear, lifelike reproduction and admirable balance. The surfaces are noiseless; the microphone technique, the last word.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

R. Strauss: Salome, Op. 54—Final Scene: Salome und das Haupt des Jokanaan. (Sung in German). Liselotte Enck (soprano) with the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 2-12" discs in album. Capitol Set EBL-8030. \$3.94. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **R. Strauss: Salome, Op. 54**—Salomes Tanz der sieben Schleier. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (CL-L-8036). \$3.85.

With the tremendous prestige attached at the present moment to the impersonation of Salome by Ljuba Welitsch, it may well be that this excellent performance of the opera's wonderful final scene will be

overlooked and will not receive its just due, consequently.

Here we have Liselotte Enck, a soprano of European reputation, and the Berlin State Opera House Orchestra, directed by Robert Heger, in an altogether exceptional performance. Furthermore, these Telefunken records are of the utmost clarity and realism. The orchestral portion of the scene, which is all-important, comes through with more clarity of detail than any so far, and this includes the recent Columbia issue with Welitch and Reiner.

Mme. Enck has a well concentrated, penetrating soprano voice, particularly telling in the upper register. She may not put all that Mme. Welitch does into the scene, but the new singer is excellent from the purely vocal angle.

The Berlin Opera Orchestra knows its way around in Strauss' demanding music, and Robert Heger plays it for all it is worth. There may be those who, having the Welitch-Reiner version, will not wish to investigate the present set, but for those interested in great clarity of recording technique, or in a variety of interpretations, Mme. Enck's version deserves careful attention.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Verdi: Macbeth—Gran Scena del Sonnambulismo (Act IV). (Sung in Italian). Margherita Grandi and Vera Terry (sopranos) and Ernest Frank (baritone), with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. Three sides, and **Verdi: Macbeth**—La luce langue (Act II). (Sung in Italian). Margherita Grandi (soprano) with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6739 and V-DB-6740) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

Macbeth or *Macbetto* was first produced in Florence, March 17, 1847. It is a very interesting musical setting of Shakespeare's grim drama, and it is one of Verdi's operas that should be heard oftener, for there are splendid choruses, and brilliant roles for dramatic soprano and baritone (Lady Macbeth and Macbeth).

Here we have the eerie Sleep-Walking Scene, conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham, and sung by the fine soprano, Margherita Grandi, assisted by Vera Terry and Ernest Frank.

Verdi achieves in a marvelous manner the horror and nightmarish quality of the scene. His economic orchestration is extremely interesting and completely effective.

Sir Thomas comes through with another of his memorable phonographic achievements. Margherita Grandi, a soprano of intensely dramatic feeling, sang the part two summers ago with great success at the Edinburgh Festival. She is quite superb on these records, and the comments by two onlookers of this grisly scene are well sung by Miss Terry and Mr. Frank.

On the fourth record-side, Mme. Grandi gives us the second act aria, *La luce langue*, with fine breadth, her voice rising to telling climaxes.

Recording is very clear and realistic. These records

will round out the collector's shelves where the recorded operas of Verdi are assembled.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Falla: La Vida Breve—Vivan los que rien! (Act I). One side, and **Falla: La Vida Breve**—Alli estaryendo (Act II). (Sung in Spanish). Victoria de los Angeles (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Stanford Robinson. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6702). \$2.63.

Last season Miss Angeles was featured in a BBC broadcast of Falla's opera *La Vida Breve*. She was no less than a sensation and HMV lost no time in having her make recordings of the two arias contained on the present disc. This record was received with acclaim when it was issued in England and we are sure that many music lovers in this country will wish to hear it when they learn that it is available. A few copies recently arrived in a shipment from abroad.

Miss Angeles gives the tragic music that spirit of intensity which makes listening to it an exciting musical experience. This disc will not appeal to every music lover, but to those to whom it does, it will be supremely fascinating.

Donizetti: Betley—In questo semplice modesto asilo. (Sung in Italian). Margherita Carosio (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Leopoldo Gennai. 1-10" disc (V-DA-1910). \$1.95.

Betley is one of the sixty-three operas from the pen of Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848) whose *Lucia* and *Don Pasquale* are so popular with opera lovers of today. Except that Betley was based on a French plot that Donizetti translated into Italian, we know nothing of this opera. The present selection is rather a pleasing and melodious air for coloratura and Miss Carosio sings it in the traditional Italian manner. Here is a new and fairly interesting item for collectors of operatic recordings.

Verdi: Simon Boccanegra—Prologue: Weary and Worn with Suffering. (Sung in English). Howell Glynne (bass) with the Sadler's Wells Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Michael Mudie. One side, and **Verdi: Simon Boccanegra**—Forgive Amelia (Act II). (Sung in English). James Johnston (tenor), Arnold Matters (baritone), Joyce Gartside (soprano) with the Sadler's Wells Orchestra conducted by Michael Mudie. 1-12" disc (V-C-3824). \$2.

Verdi: Simon Boccanegra—Nobles! Plebeians! His Gentle Words (Finale, Act I). (Sung in English). Arnold Matters (baritone), Joyce Gartside (soprano), Frederick Sharp (baritone), James Johnston (tenor), Howell Glynne (bass) with the Sadler's Wells Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Michael Mudie. 1-12" disc (V-C-3825). \$2.

Last winter at Sadler's Wells a very successful production of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* in English ran for a number of performances. These recordings were made at that time. Those interested in Italian opera

given in English will find that this pair of discs contain about as fine examples as are available. A few copies of these records arrived in a recent shipment from England.

Gluck: Orfeo ed Euridice—Che farò senza Euridice (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Susskind. One side, and **Purcell: Dido and Aeneas**—Thy hand Belinda (recit.); When I am laid in earth (aria) (Act III). (Sung in English). Kirsten Flagstad with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6913). \$2.63.

We think that music lovers generally will be surprised at the excellence of Flagstad's rendition of the Purcell selection. Somehow we don't associate her with music of that character. Don't be fooled by any preconceived notion—her English is good and she sings this piece with a fine sense of its meaning. As a matter of fact we enjoyed it more than we did the more familiar Gluck aria. This does not mean that the latter does not receive a good rendition.



VOCAL

Brahms: Vier Ernste Gesänge, Op. 121. (Sung in German). Helen Traubel (soprano) accompanied by Coenraad Bos (piano). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-323. \$3.50. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with *A Brahms Recital*. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2072). \$3.85.

Brahms' *Vier Ernste Gesänge* (*Four Serious Songs*) constitute his last composition. They were written the year before his death, and are based on biblical texts.

This wonderful music brings out all that is most noble and serious in the art of America's great soprano, Helen Traubel, who is here at her best. Musically, the *Four Serious Songs* suit the singer admirably, as they frequently employ her most beautiful register, which is the lower half of her scale.

Few, if any, contemporary contraltos boast such a gorgeous set of low tones as are at the disposal of this woman who is still listed as a soprano. A low and sustained G is encompassed with perfect ease. This is *bel canto* singing of a high order.

It is of unusual interest that Coenraad Bos is Mme. Traubel's collaborator at the piano. Mr. Bos was the pianist of the first public performance of the *Four Serious Songs*, when he played them for the great bass, Anton Sisterman, at Vienna on March 11, 1896, in the presence of Brahms himself. Two weeks later, he again played the work before the composer, this time collaborating with the celebrated tenor, Raimund von Zur-Mühlen.

Mr. Bos' performance on these records has the stamp of authority one has the right to expect. Balance is perhaps too much in favor of the singer.

The LP record, from which this review was made, contained some very annoying clicks in places where the music was soft and quiet. Otherwise this is an excellent job.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Schubert: Schwanengesang (Song Cycle). Ralph Herbert (baritone) accompanied by Frederic Waldman (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 2-10" discs in folder (AL-AL-16) (automatic sequence). \$7.70.

Allegro has issued this fine performance of Schubert's *Schwanengesang* by an artist hitherto unknown to the recording field—Ralph Herbert, baritone.

Unlike the other song cycles of Schubert, the *Schwanengesang* does not relate a continuous story. The moods of the individual songs, in this case, form a harmonious whole in mood and feeling. They were the last songs that the master composed, all written in 1828, and published under this collective title.

The famous *Serenade* is part of this collection, and there are other songs that enjoy independent lives of their own and are consequently well known to concertgoers—*Liebesbotschaft*, *Aufenthalt*, *Der Atlas*, *Am Meer*, and *Der Doppelgänger*, for instance.

Ralph Herbert is known as a specialist in Schubert songs. He has sung this cycle in his native Europe, as well as in New York and Tanglewood. Born in Vienna, the baritone is now enjoying successes at New York's City Center, where he has appeared in such operas as *Salome* and *Eugen Onegin*.

Mr. Herbert's voice is a large, resonant one. The baritone can sing softly when he so desires, but his tone is apt to become throaty and cumbersome when the vocal line features wide intervals. The singer obviously feels and understands what he is singing.

Frederic Waldman is at the piano for Mr. Herbert, and does a commendable job, even though the piano sounds a little too distant. Surfaces are superior to those of most long playing records.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Eugene Conley Concert Favorites. Eugene Conley (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Robert Farnon. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LLP-13). \$4.95.

Last month we reviewed a London LP record (L-LLP-26) which contained a number of operatic arias by the promising young American tenor, Eugene Conley. This record was well received by collectors of opera recordings. This month, Mr. Conley has recorded a number of well-known ballads which he sings in a fine sympathetic style. The present disc should have a wide appeal.

The selections are: *I Hear You Calling Me*; *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life*; *I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen*; *Forgotten*; *Because*; *Beloved*; *Thine Alone*; and *Danny Boy*.

Coots: You Go to My Head. One side, and Youmans: **More Than You Know.** Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with orchestra conducted by John Scott Trotter. 1-10" disc (V-10-1499). \$1.05.

One of Miss Kirsten's claims to fame is that she sued Milton Berle for having someone impersonate her on his well-known television show. We happened to see that show, and we thought the impersonation a

good one. However, we don't think that Miss Kirsten's impersonation here of a torch singer is especially good; there are plenty of vocalists on RCA Victor's popular artist roster who could have done a better job.

Lehar: Paganini (Potpourri). (Sung in German). Anni Frind, Walther Ludwig, Wilhelm Strienz with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Bruno Seidler-Winkler. 1-12" disc (V-EH-1046). \$2.

A grand recording of vocal selections from Lehar's *Paganini* sung in the German tradition—excellent soloists and a fine chorus nicely supported by an adequate orchestra. Well recorded.

CHORAL



Christmas Music. Rutgers University Glee Club directed by F. Austin Walter. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (Key-K-10). \$3.85.

If you are looking for a fine little LP record containing a group of traditional Christmas carols, here it is. The Rutgers University Glee Club is a celebrated musical organization and these talented young men under the able direction of F. Austin Walter sing these carols in a manner that should please everyone. The reproduction is splendid.

The selections are: *Sleepers Wake*; *A Christmas Greeting*; *Wasn't That a Mighty Day?*; *Carol of the Bells*; *Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head*; *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*; *Today is Born Emmanuel*; and *Silent Night*.

Iona Boat Song (trad.—arr. Roberton). One side, and **Thiman: Go, Lovely Rose.** Glasgow Orpheus Choir conducted by Sir Hugh Roberton. 1-10" disc (V-B-9722). \$1.42.

A goodly number of American music lovers are making collections of recordings by the famous Glasgow Orpheus Choir and thus a new disc is always an item of interest for them. The present performances rate with this organization's previous releases and so the present record should enjoy a reasonable sale in this country.

VIOLONCELLO



Tchaikovsky: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33.

Dimitry Markevitch (violoncello) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45.** Pro Musica Orchestra conducted by J. Kerekes. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (VX-PLP-6640). \$3.85.

In our September issue we reviewed an HMV recording of the *Variations on a Rococo Theme* by Tortelier (violincello) and orchestra conducted by Norman del Mar. We stated that it was a highly satisfactory performance, and now when we compare

it with the present version it sounds even better. Markevitch doesn't seem to bring the lovely melodies to life as Tortelier so successfully does. On the reverse of the present disc will be found a rather undistinguished performance of the popular *Capriccio Italien*.



PIANO

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in C major, Op. 2, No. 3. Solomon (piano). 3-12" discs in album (V-C-7747 to V-C-7749) (automatic sequence). \$5.99.

Music lovers on this side of the Atlantic have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of this recording for several months. Many of them read the glowing reviews that greeted it when it was released in England. We can do no better than quote what T. H. had to say in the April 1949 issue of *The Gramophone* (London):

"This issue deserves all the superlatives of which one can think. I had not hitherto had any special affection for this particular sonata—I certainly have many greater favorites among the early Beethovens; but Solomon's performance makes me regard this music with an altogether new amazement. Here indeed is one very great artist interpreting the work of another. His playing is in the first place technically astonishing, such precision of the fingers, such control, such rhythm. In the second place the maturity of his interpretative power is such as to reveal unsuspected beauties in every movement and to give the listener the deepest satisfaction. This is Beethoven playing indeed. The recorders have played their part with the greatest skill and I have never heard better piano tone on my gramophone. You may not dash to possess an early Beethoven piano sonata—but I am sure you will make a great mistake if you do not."

Twelve Sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti. Soulima Stravinsky (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-AL-21). \$4.85.

This Allegro LP disc introduces a famous son of a famous father. Soulima Stravinsky was born in Switzerland in 1910 just about the time that his father's first important work, *The Fire Bird*, was produced in Paris. He studied with Isidore Philipp and Nadia Boulanger. He has appeared with his father and under his father's direction numerous times. In Europe where he has made at least ten concert tours, he is recognized as a distinguished interpreter of Scarlatti, Bach and Mozart. He is one of the few pianists who can boast of having in his repertoire all of the Mozart concerti for piano and orchestra—twenty-seven in number. Young Stravinsky has appeared in this country as soloist with the Boston, Denver, and Seattle Symphonies.

The twelve Scarlatti Sonatas that are contained on this LP record are brilliantly played—the perfor-

mances fairly sparkle. They have been splendidly reproduced.

Chopin: Impromptu No. 4 in C-sharp minor, Op. 66 ("Fantasie-Impromptu"). One side, and **Liszt: Liebestraume No. 3 in A-flat major ("O Lieb").** Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 1-12" disc (C-72835D). \$1.25.

The famous *Fantasie-Impromptu* ("I'm Always Chasing Rainbows") has been lifted from *A Chopin Recital* (TNR September 1949) and coupled with the ever popular *Liebestraume* of Liszt on a twelve-inch single this month. The remarks we made about Sandor's playing in September apply now to the Liszt selection; the reproduction is fine. Here is a fine Christmas present for a child interested in classical music that is easy to listen to.



ORGAN

Bach: Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor. Fernando Germani, playing the organ at Westminster Cathedral (London). 2-12" discs (V-C-3866 and V-C-3867) (manual sequence). \$3.99.

When this recording was released in June 1949, T. H. said in *The Gramophone* (England): "It seems to me that these Germani recordings on the Westminster Cathedral organ are setting an altogether new standard. . . The playing is impeccable and the recording of the organ really wonderful."

We can add little to the above remarks: put this recording on a high fidelity phonograph, put the volume up high, and go into the next room. If this recording doesn't thrill you, we miss our guess.



DICTION

Prelude to Pearl Harbor. Kent Stevenson (narrator). Available on LP Microgroove only, 4-12" discs in album. London Set LLPA-1. \$24.85.

Just about a year ago, Columbia issued its now famous historical recording *I Can Hear It Now*—an audible document covering world history from the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 until the Japanese surrender on 2 September 1945. It was all contained on one 12-inch LP disc. Edward R. Murrow was the narrator. It enjoyed a phenomenal sale for a recording of its kind.

In England, where they are strong for details, another historical recording has been made covering the period from 1938 to the attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941. This recording is contained on 4 12-inch LP discs in album with copious notes. The narrator is Kent Stevenson. As in *I Can Hear It Now*, the voices of great world figures are introduced—Roosevelt, Churchill, Hitler, Mussolini—and in addition any number of diplomats, military figures and ordinary persons who happened to be present when the action described was taking place. The same

scheme is followed as in the previous American recording. We do not wish to seem to be cheering for the home team but we must say that we consider the domestic adventure in the field of historical recording to be vastly superior. Murrow puts an exciting spirit into his narration that makes one feel that he is actually present at the momentous occasion referred to.

The present English recording is pregnant with much data that will be of interest to students of history—scholars of today and the years to come. However, it will not have the appeal that *I Can Hear It Now* had for the general public and thus its sale will in no way approach that of its predecessor. R.

Dickens: A Christmas Carol (excerpts). One side, and **Dickens: David Copperfield** (excerpts) and **Dickens: The Pickwick Papers** (excerpts). Bransby Williams (monologuist). Available on LP Micro-groove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-56). \$4.95.

We may be mistaken but we seem to remember Bransby Williams appearing in a series of recitations on the old Keith vaudeville circuit. Was his act called "An Evening with the Poets?"

In any case he is a fine impersonator, and students of Dickens will doubtless welcome his recordings; Scrooge, Tony Weller, Micawber, and Dan'l Peggotty are all brought to life on the present disc.

MISCELLANEOUS



Folk Music of Haiti. Recorded in Haiti by Harold Courtlander. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1407. \$7.33.

Music of Spain. Recorded in Spain. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1411. \$7.33.

Music of Peru. Recorded in Peru. 4-10" discs in album. Ethnic Folkways Set EFL-1415. \$7.33.

Persons who were interested in the first five releases of recordings issued by the Ethnic Folkways Library (TNR September 1949) will doubtless be interested in these.

All of these recordings were made "on location" by qualified persons who were devoting their time to research in the field of primitive music. Generally speaking they have been very successful in securing adequate recordings. Numbers of these albums have found their way into various educational institutions, where, it is reported, they have been found invaluable in the study of the culture of these primitive peoples.

We might mention that all of these discs are made of an unbreakable plastic which provides very quiet surfaces.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Asch, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargail, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musierraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunk, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunk, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The Golden Age Recorded: A Collector's Survey. By P. G. Hurst. 175 pp. Published in England by the author. For sale in U.S.A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$4.75.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

John McCormack. By L. A. G. Strong. x+309 pp. Illustrated. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$3.25.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

The Life and Death of Chopin. By Casimir Wierzyński. Translated by Norbet Guterman with a Foreword by Artur Rubinstein. xvi+444 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 11

JANUARY, 1950

By mail to any address
50c per year

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

Collectors of celebrity records of historic interest will doubtless remember Mr. Moses' first book, *The Record Collector's Guide*, which was published in 1936 and which has been out of print for a number of years. That book of some 44 pages partially covered celebrity records issued in America between 1903 and 1912. Mr. Moses' new book of 200 pages covers records issued in America from 1895 to 1925. Since his first book the author has surely done a prodigious amount of research in his chosen field, for while his early work contained records by seventy-one artists, his present volume lists recordings by well over three hundred. From a perusal of the later work, it would seem that Mr. Moses has attempted to list all of the acoustical recordings made by celebrated vocalists since the advent of the phonograph—he covers the period from the beginning of the art of recording until the release of the first electrically recorded record.

Certainly Mr. Moses' present volume has a large and widely scattered market awaiting it, for the hobby of collecting records by the artists of "The Golden Age of Song" has grown immensely in recent years. Prices of these records are steadily increasing as the demand for them becomes greater and the supply becomes continually less and less. What collectors want most is a reasonably complete list of the recordings that were made by the great artists of the period—it is very difficult to attempt to make a complete collection of a favorite artist's records if one does not know the items in that artist's recorded repertoire. Also, a collector cannot know when he has a representative col-

lection of such records if he does not have a list of the artists who made recordings during the period. Mr. Moses' book supplies just such information in a very satisfactory manner, and in addition, the volume is replete with interesting notes on the various artists, data regarding record numbers and labels, and many other important facts that will be of supreme value to the collector. The author has been an avid collector since his boyhood, and he knows the information that will be helpful to his fellow collectors; he does his best to give it to them in his present book.

* * *

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Several months ago we reviewed another book on the beloved Irish tenor: *John McCormack* by L. A. G. Strong. As we mentioned in that review, Mr. Strong's book was written by a professional writer and was based on interviews that he had had with McCormack, with many members of his family, and with the great singer's personal friends and professional acquaintances. Mr. Strong did a good, workman-like job, although he gave us very little statistical data and few specific dates. One might say that after reading Mr. Strong's book, he (the reader) had a very good general idea of how McCormack impressed the persons with whom that singer came in contact outside of his home.

Mrs. McCormack's *I Hear You Calling Me* (the title is taken from the ballad with which McCormack's name is so closely associated and the recording of which proved to be his largest selling record) is an entirely different account of the great tenor's life; in it McCormack is viewed from quite another angle. Mrs. Mc-

Cormack quite naturally sees her celebrated husband through the eyes of a loving wife, mother of his children, and faithful and constant companion. Lily and John were sweethearts in their native Ireland before John became famous in the world of opera and song, and afterward they traveled to far corners of the world together and remained sweethearts until John passed on to his reward in 1945. Lily is a sentimental wife and mother, and she continually gives the reader intimate details of the McCormacks' family life which indicate that John was a very sentimental Irishman himself. Both Lily and John were deeply religious and the high place the Church held in their lives is stressed in Mrs. McCormack's book. John became a Papal Chamberlain, an honor both of them felt was the greatest he ever achieved.

From the above it would seem that Mr. Strong's book and Mrs. McCormack's complement each other and that is just what they do. In the former we have McCormack as the world knew him and in the latter as he is remembered by those most near and dear to him. After reading both of them objectively, one should have a true and comprehensive picture of one of the truly great artists of our century.

Since his death there has developed a new interest in his recordings and collectors will go to any length of trouble to acquire as complete a file of them as possible. Many of them are almost impossible to find, but that is what makes collecting McCormack records so interesting. Mr. Strong's book included an appendix which contained a list of over 100 records by the great tenor which were made between 1907 and 1939. Mrs. McCormack secured the services of Philip F. Roden, who supplied a discography for her book that is reputed to be complete. It lists with record numbers over 500 recordings—starting with the cylinders which McCormack made for Edison and Edison Bell in 1904, then his first discs made for the Gramophone and Typewriter Company, his Pathé and Odeon discs, and finally the long list he made for Victor in America and H.M.V. in England. Mr. Roden's discography is undoubtedly the most valuable list of McCormack recordings ever

compiled and should certainly be worth the price of Mrs. McCormack's book to any collector of the celebrated tenor's records.

* * *

"Getting Around in French" and "Getting Around in Spanish" are the titles of two inexpensive little albums (\$2.98 each including tax) designed to help you find your way around in both of these languages. Each album contains three 7-inch unbreakable discs and sixteen pages of text. The records will play on any standard 78 rpm phonograph.

These little albums should be a real help to any student—he should easily get his ear attuned to the pronunciation by repeatedly playing these discs and should firmly establish in his mind a limited basic travel vocabulary. If he wishes to go further, more elaborate sets of records, such as Linguaphone, are available for future study. For those who have had high school French or Spanish and plan to take a trip abroad these albums provide ideal refresher courses. As there have been numerous requests for just such inexpensive sets of records, we predict that these albums will enjoy a wide and substantial sale. If your local dealer cannot supply them, orders addressed to the publisher of this bulletin will receive prompt attention.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most issues published during the last seventeen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Wagner: *Die Walküre*—Love Duet (Act I, Scene 3). Helen Traubel (soprano) and Emery Darcy (tenor) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of N. Y.—Rodzinski. One side, and Wagner: *Die Walküre*—Act III (complete). Helen Traubel (soprano), Herbert Janssen (baritone), Chorus of the Metropolitan Opera, and Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of N. Y.—Rodzinski. 2-12" discs (C-SL-105) (automatic sequence). \$9.70. (TNR Aug. '46 & Nov. '45).

Prokofiev: *Alexander Nevsky*, Op. 78. Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano), the Westminster Choir conducted by John Finley Williamson, and the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4247). \$4.85. (TNR Nov. '45).

Saint-Saëns: *Concerto No. 4 in C minor, Op. 44.* Robert Casadesus (piano) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of N. Y.—Rodzinski. One side, and Satie: *Trois Morceaux en forme de poire.* Robert and Gaby Casadesus (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4246). \$4.85. (TNR Nov. '45 & Sept. '48).

Ives: *Sonata No. 2* (Concord, Mass., 1840-1860). John Kirkpatrick (piano). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4250). \$4.85. (TNR Aug. '48).

Milhaud: *Symphony No. 1.* Columbia Broadcasting Symphony—Milhaud. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2082). \$3.85. (TNR June '48).

Music of Fritz Kreisler. One side, and Music of Sigmund Romberg. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4253). \$4.85. (TNR July '46 & Dec. '46).

A Program of Mexican Music. Chorus of National Music League and orchestra conducted by Carlos Chávez. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2080). \$3.85. (TNR Sept. '40).

Shostakovich: *Symphony No. 6, Op. 53.* Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra—Reiner. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4249). \$4.85. (TNR Dec. '45).

Mahler: *Symphony No. 1 in D major.* Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra — Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4251). \$4.85. (TNR Oct. '41).

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 17* ("Little Russian"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra—Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4252). \$4.85. (TNR June '47).

Opera Duets. Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor) and Pia Tassinari (soprano). 1-12" disc (CE-50,018). \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '49).

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: *Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36.*

San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1325. \$6.

Written during a period of despair in Beethoven's life, the *Second Symphony* is essentially joyous—a seemingly spontaneous creation of joy. It is not heard as frequently as deserved, though it is music that "takes" on first hearing. Only a year separated the composition of the *First* and *Second Symphonies*, but in that year the individual stamp of Beethoven was asserting itself, and we find many flashes of the mature Beethoven darting through the pages of the *Second*. With the Scherzo of the *Second*, one of his greatest innovations comes into being—the movement of quick laughter and wild headlong humor.

Genial Pierre Monteux is a natural choice for conductor of this music, and he performs it with marvelous warmth, grace, breadth, and abandon. It is a satisfying blend of the several qualities needed to

do real justice to this type music. Pierre does not race it, is not angular and square with his precision, nor is the thing loose and shapeless. It has beautiful contour and his own unique quality of warmth. The San Francisco Orchestra has never impressed us as one of the greatest, but it is a reasonably good outfit with a terrific relish for whatever Pierre is directing at the moment.

Previous recordings of this enjoyable symphony have fared well. Fritz Reiner and Pittsburgh (Col. MM-597), in a well recorded version, were good if a bit taut and rough at times; Koussevitsky and Boston (Vic. DM-625) were excellent; and the best of them all was Beecham and London Philharmonic, whose *Larghetto* was superb, a reading which is considered the high water mark for this work (Col. MM-302).

Reproduction of the present set is good, although plenty bouncy with reverberation and a trifle hard in string tone. In all it is a worthy addition to the lists.

S.

Sibelius: *Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43.* Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 5-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1334. \$7.25.

About a year and a half ago Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra made a new Sibelius *Second* (Col. MM-759), and we gave it warm praise. With the new Beecham one, others except Ormandy's are clearly out of the picture—Koussevitsky's old set because of feeble and noisy reproduction and a ponderous reading, Kajanus because of ancient reproduction, and Barbirolli because of sloppy orchestral playing (although a fine reading). Needless to say Ormandy's orchestra plays with great polish and Beecham's is mighty close to it. As is usually the case, Ormandy interprets the work in a solid, conventional manner, and often injects thrilling moments. Sir Thomas appears to have a more fine-grained idea about the content of the score, has searched it more thoroughly, and consequently extracts more from it. This interpretation is deeply felt and communicated to the listener in a telling manner. His reading is matched with intimate recording which portrays the details nicely and also achieves stunning power in the tutti passages. It is in every way a splendid recording and one to discourage other entries in the field.

As we remarked in the Ormandy review, the *Second* is a popular work, and both Columbia and Victor needed good new versions. Now that we have them, both good ones too, let's get on with the business of presenting some of the neglected Sibelius repertoire, of which there is plenty.

S.

Copland: *Billy the Kid* (Ballet Suite). Five sides, and Copland: *Statements for Orchestra—Jingo.* RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leonard Bernstein. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1333. \$4.75.

For symphonic performances, Aaron Copland has arranged this Suite from his very successful ballet,

Billy the Kid. The Suite is in six movements—the Prelude and the Epilogue contain music from *The Open Prairie* section of the ballet and between them are: *Street Scene*; *Card Scene*; *Fight*; and *Celebration*. Copland has been most successful in his work in bringing out graphically the old West with its wild and strange characters. To add just the proper flavor he has introduced such well-known cowboy tunes as: *Git Along Little Dogies*; *The Dying Cowboy*; *The Old Chisholm Trail*; and *Old Paint*.

RCA Victor used excellent judgment in selecting the brilliant composer and conductor, Leonard Bernstein, to direct this selection. Mr. Bernstein is deeply interested in the ballet, having composed several very successful ones, and presents Copland's thrilling music in a most attractive manner. Ballet fans should certainly not miss this outstanding album.

Debussy—trans. Caplet: *The Children's Corner*. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1327. \$4.

Stokowski's splendid performance of this delightful music will warm the hearts of numerous little ones and of their parents too, for that matter. Debussy composed this little suite for his young daughter. It was originally for piano but was shortly transcribed for orchestra by André Caplet. It is Caplet's version that appears on these discs.

In case you have forgotten, this charming Suite consists of the following sections: *Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum*; *Jimbo's Lullaby*; *Serenade for the Doll*; *The Snow is Dancing*; *The Little Shepherd*; and *Golliwogg's Cake-walk*. Debussy gave the little pieces English titles which suggests that perhaps his young daughter had an English nurse.

Respighi: Le Fontaine di Roma ("The Fountains of Rome"). Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo (Rome) conducted by Victor de Sabata. 2-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1337. \$3.50.

In the present recording we have a modern and satisfactory version of this remarkable symphonic poem by Respighi. It is the first of three that he wrote to celebrate the fame of Italy's great capital. The succeeding ones are: *Pines of Rome* and *Roman Festivals*.

The present album contains a recording that should find a welcome place in any well-rounded record library.

Strauss: An der schönen blauen Donau, Op. 314 ("On the Beautiful Blue Danube"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80129). \$1.32.

There are certainly plenty of fine recordings of the *Blue Danube Waltz* already available, but perhaps there are few record collectors who would like to have Clemens Krauss' version of it. As it is a top-notch recording and not expensive, perhaps its sale will warrant Capitol's re-pressing it for the American trade.

Sibelius: Valse Triste (from "Kuolema, Op. 44"). One side, and Schmidt: *Zwischenspiel* (from "Notre Dame"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80132). \$1.32.

Smetana: The Bartered Bride—*Furiant* (Act II). One side, and Lortzing: *Zar und Zimmermann*—*Holzschuhantz*. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80131). \$1.32.

This pair of discs contains four tuneful selections nicely played by the Berlin Philharmonic under the able direction of Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. They were originally recorded by Telefunken in Germany and have been re-pressed by Capitol in this country.

Sibelius' *Valse Triste* is well-known on this side of the Atlantic but we rather believe that the other selections will be new to most of our readers. If you are looking for new music that one may easily enjoy, we suggest that you investigate these records.

Sibelius: Finlandia, Op. 26. Boston "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 1-12" disc (V-12-1049). \$1.31.

And yet another recording of *Finlandia* despite the fact that the various catalogs are full of them! However, Fiedler does a top-notch job and the popularity of the Boston "Pops" may carry this one to the best sellers list.

CONCERTO



Grieg: Concerto in A minor, Op. 16. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1343. \$4.75.

More than seven years have passed since Victor issued the famous Rubinstein-Ormandy Philadelphia Orchestra recording of the Grieg Concerto (DM-900). In the meantime it has been a consistent best seller, Rubinstein's popularity has increased even more, and Grieg's vehicle still pulls heavily. In the interim we also find Ormandy and his band not on the same label as Rubinstein. The time has therefore arrived for a new appraisal of this concerto. Rubinstein, of course, was selected for the historic undertaking, and casting about for something to accompany him, they found an orchestra on the west coast, convenient to Rubinstein's location, an orchestra called the RCA Victor Symphony, which name may be attached to any group. We are told a studio with remarkable acoustic qualities was used: "the concerto emerges with a degree of balance and dynamics that is amazing," in a recording "which underscores the unity of conception between solo artist, conductor, and orchestra." All of this may be very true, and it cannot be denied that Rubinstein is always a commanding artist. But it seems that the aura of an important event is missing. We have a good

mechanical performance, competent, well reproduced, and commercially acceptable. Would it have been better to use an orchestra and conductor of some note, with whom Rubinstein had performed the work in concert, recorded in their own hall? There is something about the older Rubinstein-Ormandy set which is intangible yet more convincing and exciting.

For those who do not subscribe to the foregoing discussion, we can say the present recording will prove eminently satisfactory. Rubinstein's performance is still tops and the reproduction is very fine. Anyone who does not yet own this lovely work will probably take the newest version and be happy with it, while the old-timers can safely stick to their favorite now reposing on the shelf. S.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26. William Kapell (piano) with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1326. \$4.75.

Of Prokofiev's five piano concertos, the *Third* is the best known because of frequent performances. Dimitri Mitropoulos has helped it become popular in this country by performing the solo part himself and conducting the orchestral part simultaneously. His recording of it with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Col. MM-667) is a vital rendition somewhat marred by tubby reproduction. The older record by the composer with the London Symphony shows its age by today's standards. The new version by Kapell is clearly the best reproduction and is, besides, a fiery interpretation. We would easily prefer it to the previous versions.

Characteristic of Prokofiev's concertos is the *Third* with its comparative economy of means, obvious lyricism woven with biting, satirical lines. There is a clever fusion of the virtuoso solo technique of the instrument together with the modern piano obbligato use of the instrument in orchestra passages. The brilliant percussive style is another characteristic. We would not suggest this work as the next step after the Tchaikovsky or Grieg concertos; but it should not be inaccessible to record collectors with a reasonably wide musical acquaintance. Its appeal does not seem to dim with repeated hearings over a period of several years. It looks to some as though this concerto will be in the repertoire for many decades to follow. It is absolute music with no program whatever, which should help its chances of survival. S.

Mozart: Concerto in A major, K. 622. F. Etienne (clarinet) with the Hewitt Chamber Orchestra. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Ode Funèbre, K. 477—Adagio.** Hewitt Chamber Orchestra. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-DLP-6660). \$5.95.

Not nearly as popular as the *Clarinet Quintet*, the *Clarinet Concerto* is nevertheless a work of interesting content. Written almost at the door of death, it is a remarkably youthful essay, with a serenity and airiness that betray Mozart's awareness of his imminent death.

The opening movement is reminiscent—Mozart dwells in his youth but with the wisdom of maturity—nothing exceptionally new or exciting, just satisfying music. The adagio is songful and with meaning, while the concluding rondo is gay dance music.

The recording by Reginald Kell with the London Philharmonic under Sargent (Vic. DM-708) is a more affecting rendition than the present one which was originally issued several years ago on Discophiles Français in France. The performance is good technically and is performed with admirable spirit and style, but the Kell version has more polish and finesse. Considering the availability of the present version on Long Playing records, it can be recommended to LP collectors as a satisfactory disc.

As a bonus, to complete the second side, we find a most unusual piece in the *Ode Funèbre*, written in a happy period of the master's life (1782-1785). The two works offer a paradox—the funeral music written during a happy period and the Concerto of normal charm written on the threshold of death. The *Ode Funèbre* was written as the last homage to the two men who played a big part in Mozart's life: his protectors, Duke of Mecklembourg and Prince Esterhazy. It is performed by the Hewitt Chamber Orchestra with sincerity and conviction. Reproduction is satisfactory. S.

Bach: Concerto No. 2 in C major for Three Pianos and Orchestra. G. Kuhn, G. Lasson, C. Beche (pianos) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. One side, and

Bach: Concerto in A minor for Four Pianos and Orchestra. G. Kuhn, G. Astorg, G. Lasson, C. Beche (pianos) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6650). \$5.95.

Bach wrote three concertos for two claviers, two concertos for three claviers and one for four claviers, the last named being a skillful arrangement from a *Concerto for Four Violins* by Vivaldi. Bach's arrangements amounted to more than a transcription for another instrument; they were a re-working of the material in richer harmonic development and tighter instrumental texture. The *Four Clavier Concerto* is not as elaborate a piece as the C major *Three Clavier Concerto* here recorded. The one for three claviers is quite a masterpiece of tonal and rhythmic effects with an amazing amount of invention. The finale is particularly impressive. It is a perfectly natural piece, not an uneasy essay or stunt for an awkward combination of instruments. It is considered possible that the original of this work was for violins, for an alternate version in the key of D for these instruments is in existence.

A previous recording of each of these works appears in the catalogs; they are, however, rather old ones and not of exceptional merit. The new recordings were made in France and are highly satisfying. The performances have a good pace and a crisp quality

that is becoming. The tone of the pianos is on the thin side, but that is no deterrent in this case. Goldschmidt seems to keep things moving well, on a correct artistic basis. We found both performances stylistically good. As each one occupies one side of an LP disc, hearing the works without interruption is an added pleasure. Surfaces, as on most Vox-Polydor LP's, are notably quiet.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Schubert: Sonata No. 5 in A major, Op. 162 ("Duo"). Fredell Lack (violin) and Leonid Hambro (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-22). \$3.85.

The release of this fine disc adds an important chamber music item to the domestic repertory of recorded music. The A Major Sonata dates from 1817 when Schubert was twenty and was beginning his great creative period—it foreshadows his greatest works which were to follow some six or seven years later.

We note with pleasure that Allegro is securing the services of a number of promising young artists for its recordings. Among them are the two very talented ones who have made this excellent record. Fredell Lack comes from Tulsa, Oklahoma, and made her debut at Town Hall in 1943 after residence and study in New York since the age of twelve. A pupil of the famous Louis Persinger, Miss Lack has appeared with success with a number of symphony orchestras including the Kansas City Symphony under Efrem Kurtz. A coast-to-coast concert tour has been planned for her during which she will visit nearly every important music center in the country . . . Leonid Hambro, still in his twenties, is one of the more brilliant among the group of younger pianists. Mr. Hambro has won several awards including a fellowship at the Juilliard School of Music, to which institution's faculty he has recently been appointed.

Pergolesi: Salve Regina (No. 5). Allegro Chamber Society with Patricia Neway (soprano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-25). \$3.85.

Giovanni Pergolesi (1710-1736) is best known for his opera-buffe *La Serva Padrona* and his oratorio *Stabat Mater*. Despite the fact that he was only twenty-six when he died he left a large and wide selection of compositions. The present *Salve Regina* was written during the last year of his life and is scored for soprano voice, two violins, viola and violoncello. It is in six movements: *Salve Regina*; *Ad te clamamus*; *Ad te Suspiramus*; *Eia Ergo*; *Et Jesum Benedictum*; and *O Clemens, O Pia*.

This thoroughly charming composition is practically unknown in this country and the present recording is the first that we know of. We cannot speak too highly of the excellent artists who have made it and we urge all discerning music lovers to investigate it.

It is music of another day that we believe will prove very rewarding.

Beethoven: Notturno in D, Op. 42. William Primrose (viola) and David Stimer (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1336. \$4.75.

This lovely suite for viola and piano in seven short movements was arranged from an early Beethoven work, the *Serenade for Violin, Viola and Violoncello* in *D major*, Opus 8. The *Serenade* has been recorded previously but we do not recall another recording of the present *Notturno*. Therefore, this excellent album by William Primrose and David Stimer is of particular importance and we direct it to the attention of all collectors of chamber music recordings. We might mention further that the charming melodies that it contains should be attractive to practically any serious music lover.

CHORAL



Monteverdi Madrigals. Lagrime d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata. One side, and *Lamento d'Arianna*. Couraud Vocal Ensemble. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-DLP-6670). \$5.95.

The two madrigals contained on the present record represent some of the finest music from the pen of the celebrated Italian composer, Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643).

The first, "Tears of a lover at the tomb of the beloved," was the result of the premature death of a talented young singer at the court in which Monteverdi was employed. To honor her memory the duke commissioned him to write a suitable work. There is no evidence that Monteverdi was in love with the girl, but doubtless he admired her greatly for he seemingly put his soul into this beautiful composition.

The second, "Arianna's Lament," comes much closer to Monteverdi's heart. It is the only remaining fragment of the lost opera "Arianna" which the composer wrote in 1608. Monteverdi's wife died shortly before he began the work, and into this "Lament" he poured his own sorrow. Although nothing else remains of the opera, we do know that it was a tremendous success. One indication of its popularity is that, although it was originally written for solo voice, Monteverdi himself later adapted the lament for five voices, and included it in his sixth book of madrigals. It is this version that is recorded here.

We are glad to note that the complete Italian text of both of these selections with English translations are included with this disc. We suggest that the listener follow the text as he listens; it will certainly make this lovely music much more vital.

These recordings were made in France by a group of male and female singers of rare ability and we are sure that those persons interested in music of this character will be highly pleased with the present disc.

R.

Choral Music of France. Pro Musica Choral Society conducted by Crane Calder. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-17). \$3.85.

This is an unusual and very charming record. On the first side we have secular choral music from the 15th and 16th centuries with the following composers represented: Orlandus Lassus, Jean Mouton, François Couperin, Josquin Des Pres and Clement Janequin. On the reverse side we have music of the present century by Debussy and Ravel. As we compare the works of the early composers with those of our time, it is remarkable how much they have in common despite the great bridge of time that separates them. We found this disc intensely interesting, and we do not hesitate to recommend it, especially to serious students.

The Pro Musica Choral Society is composed of professional singers, each an outstanding soloist in his or her own right, who have merged into the anonymity of a singing group out of their love of choral music. For years they have been meeting to sing for their own pleasure. *Allegro* deserves to be highly congratulated for its enterprise in arranging for recordings by this fine organization.

OPERA

Six Coloratura Arias. Lily Pons (soprano) with Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-876. \$4.75. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2084). \$3.85.

Rigoletto—Caro nome (not on 78 rpm version).

Rigoletto—Tutte le feste al tempio.

I Puritani—Son virgin vezzosa.

Linda di Chamounix—O luce di quest' anima.

Mignon—Je suis Titania.

La Sonnambula—Ah! non credea mirarti.

La Sonnambula—Ah! non giunge.

Lily Pons is undoubtedly one of the most completely recorded of operatic artists. Certainly, she is the most extensively recorded coloratura soprano. Singers like Sembrich, Tetrazzini, Hempel and Galli-Curci recorded only a fraction of the discs which this present-day celebrity has made. When the name of Lily Pons is only a legend, she will have left a pretty complete picture of her coloratura art.

Here we have seven more arias by Miss Pons. Some of them are well-known staples of the coloratura repertoire, others are more unusual.

All the features of Miss Pons' singing are present in this new set of selections: the refinement of her style and tone; the small volume and unusual height of her top register; the occasional deviation from pitch in the middle tones.

Interesting are the two arias from *La Sonnambula* and the rarely recorded *Son virgin vezzosa* from Bellini's *Puritani*. Miss Pons has the instinctive style



for these things. Less interesting is the air from *Linda di Chamounix*, except that it will serve as a reminder that Miss Pons appeared at the Metropolitan in this opera, during the seasons of 1933-34 and 1934-35, supported by Richard Crooks and Giuseppe De Luca.

The *Polonaise* from *Mignon* and the *Caro nome* from *Rigoletto* are an old and familiar story as far as Miss Pons is concerned, and she has recorded them before on earlier occasions. It will suffice to say that they are characteristic performances. So is the passage, *Tutte le feste al tempio* from *Rigoletto*, in which purity of tone makes up for a lack of dramatic force.

Andre Kostelanetz conducts in a sympathetic mood, and the recording is clear. The LP disc of this collection offers all seven arias, while the 78 rpm version contains only six, the *Caro nome* being omitted.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Eight Operatic Arias. Claudia Muzio (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (Esoteric 500). \$5.95.

I Lombardi—Se vano se vano, è il pregare.

Loreley—Dove son?

Hérodiade—Egli è bel come il ciel.

I Vespi Siciliani—Bolero: Mercè, dilette amiche. *Rinaldo*—Lascia ch' io pianga.

Eugen Onégin—Sei forse l'angelo fedele?

L'Africaine—Figlio del sol, mio dolce amor.

Carmen: Je dis que rien ne m'épouante—Air de Micaëla.

This disc will be of interest only to those persons who are making a collection of recordings by the fabulous Claudia Muzio, whose spectacular operatic career was cut off in its prime by her death in Italy in 1936.

A number of her early acoustical recordings were secured by Esoteric Record Corp. and dubbed on this 12-inch LP disc. The reproduction of Miss Muzio's marvelous voice is adequate enough for the listener to realize that he is listening to one of the great voices of all times, but the accompaniments are weak and blurred and the surface noise is above normal.

Verdi: La Traviata—Lunge da lei per me non v'ha diletto! (recit.); De' miei bollenti spiriti (Act II). One side, and **Massenet: Manon**—Ah! dispar vision (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6868). \$2.63.

Verdi: La Traviata—Lunge da lei per me non v'ha diletto! (recit.); De' miei bollenti spiriti (Act II). One side, and **Puccini: La Tosca**—E Lucevan le stelle (Act III). (Sung in Italian). Giuseppe di Stefano (tenor) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6868). \$1.31.

The first record listed above (V-DB-6868) just

arrived in a shipment from England. Upon its arrival it met the release of the RCA Victor domestic disc (V-12-1018) which contained the aria from *La Traviata* but on the reverse side the *La Tosca* selection instead of the *Manon* aria. Thus operatic fans in this country may take their choice.

Opera lovers knew of Stefano's glorious voice before he arrived to join the Metropolitan through his imported recordings. We presume that because of this fine artist's growing popularity, RCA Victor will make most of his recordings available in this country under its domestic label. We hope so because it would be a great saving to have them at the domestic prices.

Verdi: Don Carlos—O don fatale (Act III). One side, and **Verdi: Macbeth**—Una macchia è qui tottora. (Sung in Italian). Elena Nikolaidi (contralto) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (C-72884D). \$1.25. Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-384). 95¢.

Rossini: Semiramide—Bel raggio lusinghier (Act I). (Sung in Italian). Elena Nikolaidi (contralto) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (C-72885D). \$1.25. Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-400). 95¢.

Elena Nikolaidi was born near Athens, Greece. She won a scholarship to study in Vienna and thus came to the attention of Bruno Walter and was immediately engaged to sing at the State Opera in that city. Her American debut was at Town Hall (New York) in January 1949. She sang the contralto part in Columbia's recording of Beethoven's Ninth conducted by Walter.

The pair of discs listed above contain her first Columbia operatic recordings. Miss Nikolaidi has a voice of great strength and rich quality but it would seem that her Italian diction is not as clear as it might be.

Memories of Caruso. Enrico Caruso (tenor) with orchestra. 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set MO-1329. \$4.75.

Aïda—Celeste Aïda.

Pagliacci—Vesti la giubba.

Martha—M'appari tutt' amor.

Cavalleria Rusticana—Addio alla madre.

Carmen—Air de fleur.

L'Elisir d'Amore—Una furtiva lagrima.

Except for his recordings, Enrico Caruso is only a name to the present younger generation. In order that more persons may know of this "greatest singer of all times" RCA Victor has selected a number of his recordings made during the decade of 1907-1917 and have housed them in the present album. They are, of course, all acoustical recordings and one must make allowance for that fact. The accompaniments are

weak but the great voice is there—a voice that cannot help thrilling all listeners.

Puccini: La Bohème—Si, mi chiamano Mimi (Act I). One side, and **Puccini: Suor Angelica**—Senza mamma. (Sung in Italian). Licia Albanese (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Victor Trucco. 1-12" disc (V-12-1048). \$1.31.

Albanese's host of admirers will doubtless welcome this superb disc containing a familiar aria from *La Bohème* and the intensely dramatic selection from the same composer's lesser-known one-act opera *Suor Angelica*. Here is a disc that lovers of operatic recordings should not miss.

Mozart: Idomeneo, Re di Creta, K. 366—Tiefe stille um mich (recit.); Fruhlingsdufte (aria) (Act III). (Sung in German). Erna Berger (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6617). \$2.63.

Only occasionally can a reviewer go all out for a recording. However, we certainly can go all out for Erna Berger's rendition of this soliloquy from Mozart's "Idomeneo." We cannot imagine a better performance on the part of the singer and we have nothing but praise for the orchestral accompaniment. Mr. Krips, please take a bow.

Miss Berger's lovely legato is delightful and the perfection of her scale passages is something at which to marvel. We invite all discerning opera lovers to investigate this superb recording.

Wagner: Tannhäuser—Elisabeths Gebet: Allmächt'ge Jungfrau, hör mein Flehen! (Act III). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (V-DB-6795). \$2.63.

There is such a great demand for Flagstad recordings in this country that it is only necessary to announce that a new one has arrived from abroad to have the few copies that have been received quickly taken up by her admirers.

VOCAL

Ravel: Shéhérazade. (Sung in French). Maggie Teyte (soprano) with the Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Hugo Rignold. 2-12" discs (V-DB-6843 and V-DB-6844) (manual sequence). \$5.25.

Ravel seems like the ideal composer for these exotic poems of Tristan Klingsor, the pseudonym of the writer, Leon Leclerc. Composed in 1903, *Shéhérazade* is not only one of Ravel's early successes, but it is also the only composition in this particular form that he undertook.

Filled with gorgeous orchestral color, and splashes of light and shadow, the three panels of *Shéhérazade*—*Asie*, *L'Indifferent*, and *La Flûte Enchanté*—make easy and delightful listening, the exotic texts glowing from the vivid musical setting.



There are already two excellent recordings of this fine piece, one by Janine Micheau and the Lamoureux Orchestra under Bigot, and another by Suzanne Danco and a French orchestra under Ansermet.

However, here we have the one and only Maggie Teyte lending her unique and plaintive tone and unsurpassed diction in a performance that surpasses the others for distinctive qualities. *Shéhérazade* is right down Miss Teyte's alley, and she makes the most of the smoldering languors and nostalgic affirmations that are to be found for the seeking.

The distinguished British soprano is brilliantly supported by the Royal Opera House Orchestra of Covent Garden under the baton of Hugo Rignold. Mr. Rignold does not quite equal Ansermet's achievement, however.

A decision will rest ultimately with the individual as to whether he will decide on the Micheau, the Danco or the Teyte performance. This writer is inclined to prefer the charming British singer.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Brown: Alone. One side, and **Romberg: Deep in My Heart, Dear** (from "The Student Prince"). Allan Jones (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-10" disc (V-10-1494). \$1.05.

When it comes to recording popular songs we just don't think that anyone can do a more satisfactory job than Allan Jones. This young singer has not made so many recordings but so far as we can remember he has never made a poor one. The present disc contains two that are up to his usual standard.

Malotte: The Lord's Prayer. One side, and **Kern: Ol' Man River.** Robert Merrill (baritone) with Russ Case and his Orchestra. 1-10" disc (V-10-1513). \$1.05.

There are certainly no two selections that are generally more popular than *The Lord's Prayer* and *Ol' Man River*. Given the fine renditions afforded by Robert Merrill on this disc, we should surely have a likely candidate for the best sellers list.

Gershwin: The Man I Love. One side, and **Kern: Why Was I Born?** Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with orchestra conducted by John Scott Trotter. 1-10" disc (V-10-1497). \$1.05.

If you have tears prepare to shed them now, for Miss Kirsten moans these popular ditties in the manner of the lowest-down torch singer. We didn't shed any tears, but we did pull out a few hairs from our sparsely covered pate.

Schubert: Standchen—"Leise flehen meine Lieder." (Schwanengesang No. 4). One side, and **Schubert: An den Mond.** Lotte Lehmann (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-10" disc (V-10-1498). \$1.05.

There is no question of Lotte Lehmann's pre-eminence in the field of Schubert lieder. The present disc will only help to further establish that distinction.

Mr. Ulanowsky deserves at least a nod for his fine accompaniments.

Millöcker: Der Bettelstudent (excerpts). (Sung in German). Peter Anders (tenor), Carla Spletter (soprano) and Hans-Heinz Nissen (baritone) with chorus and orchestra of the German Opera House conducted by N. Schultze. 1-12" disc (CL-89-80130). \$1.32.

German light opera sung in the spirit of the Vienna of another day. Rather jolly to listen to if you're in the mood for such music. Nicely recorded.



PIANO

Schumann: Fantasiestücke, Op. 12. Artur Rubinstein (piano). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1335. \$4.75.

Fantasiestücke, Op. 12, is a set of eight *Fantasy* Pieces, created during a period of rich and enthusiastic inventiveness by the then most advanced modernist of his time. Poetic titles, which Schumann affixed after he had written the music, head each composition. The titles reflect the age in which this music was written. In English, they are: *In the Evening; Soaring; Why?; Whims; In the Night; Fable; Dream Visions; and Song's End*. The general spontaneity of the entire group indicates that the work had literally gushed from the composer's pen. His special improvisational quality lends a romantic touch to every phrase.

A previous recording by Harold Bauer (Vic. M-379) was of mixed qualities in that he did not play all of the numbers well—several were fine, a few not too good. The present set by Rubinstein puts the earlier one in the shade, and is of course, better recorded. Rubinstein performs each of these pieces with just the correct shades of interpretation; it is a notably fine achievement. There is quiet beauty where indicated, while in the larger numbers, we have a strong, almost robust quality, which still retains beauty and does not get clangy. It takes a sensitive artist of high calibre to do justice to a varied group such as *Fantasiestücke*, and Rubinstein meets every demand. This is a good set for jaded appetites, as we presume not many folks own this music. S.

Schumann: Fantasia in C major, Op. 17. Seven sides, and **Schumann: Träumerei** (from "Kinder-scenen, Op. 15"). Rudolf Firkusny (piano). 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-862. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4238). \$4.85.

This outstanding work of Schumann's has been missing from the domestic catalogs for many years. It is certainly his most important composition for pianoforte and some critics believe that it is his greatest in any form. Wilhelm Bachaus made a fine recording of it a decade or so ago and it was listed in the RCA Victor catalog for sometime but finally

disappeared.

Schumann wrote his famous Fantasia during the summer of 1836 when he was trying so hard to gain the hand of Clara Wieck, and her father was doing everything possible to break up the friendship between them. Schumann's beloved Clara is doubtless the inspiration for this glorious work. The notes that accompany this album stress this attachment in some detail.

The young Bohemian pianist, Rudolf Firkusny, who was first heard in America in 1938, makes his debut on Columbia records with a superb rendition of this work which should quickly find its way into the library of all collectors for piano recordings.

Liszt: Soirées Musicales de Rossini—Nocturne; and **Liszt: Paraphrase de Concert** (based on the "Quartet" from "Rigoletto"). Ferruccio Busoni (piano), reproduced from original piano rolls. One side, and **Schubert: Impromptu in G, Op. 90, No. 3** and **Carreño: Spanish Dance**. Teresa Carreño (piano) reproduced from original piano rolls. And **Schumann: Kreisleriana, Op. 16, No. 7**. Raoul Pugno (piano) reproduced from original piano rolls. And **Chopin: Waltz in D-flat, Op. 64, No. 1**. Fannie Bloomfield-Zeisler (piano) reproduced from original piano rolls. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-30). \$3.85.

Chopin: Scherzo in C-sharp minor, Op. 39 and **Chopin: Ballade in A-flat, Op. 47**. One side, and **Chopin: Nocturne No. 12 in G major, Op. 37, No. 2** and **Chopin: Waltz No. 14 in E minor, Op. posth.** and **Chopin: Waltz No. 11 in G-flat, Op. 70, No. 1** and **Chopin: Waltz No. 7 in C-sharp minor, Op. 64, No. 2**. Leopold Godowsky (piano) reproduced from original piano rolls. Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-31). \$3.85.

We have no idea of how much interest these two records will create. Perhaps none, but we feel that our readers should know that they are available. All of the great pianists who are represented on these discs have passed to their reward. Busoni, Pugno and Godowsky each made a few recordings but they are very scarce items these days. We do not recall that Carreño or Bloomfield-Zeisler ever made any. Therefore there may be some persons who would like to have a recording of the piano rolls that these great artists made. If so, the present records will satisfy that demand very nicely.

Scriabin: Sonata No. 4 in F-sharp minor, Op. 30. William Schatzkamer (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-1050). \$1.31.

With this superb performance of a Scriabin Sonata, the brilliant young pianist, William Schatzkamer, makes his debut on the Red Seal label. Mr. Schatzkamer is a native New Yorker and made a very successful bow to New York audiences at Town Hall in 1948. The selection that he has chosen for his first RCA Victor recording calls for a very special tech-

nique. Mr. Schatzkamer has the "singing" tone and sense of color required, and thus his performance should meet with high praise from even the most discerning music lovers.

Gershwin: Variations on "I Got Rhythm." Two sides, and **Gershwin: Second Rhapsody**. Oscar Levant (piano) with Morton Gould and his Orchestra. Three sides and **Copland: The Open Prairie** (from "Billy the Kid"). Oscar Levant (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-867. \$4.75. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **Gershwin: Preludes Nos. I, II, and III**. Oscar Levant (piano). 1-10" disc (C-ML-2073). \$3.85.

George Gershwin, Oscar Levant and Morton Gould make an ideal trio, and thus those who are interested in Gershwin's music will be delighted with this album. Little more need be said except that the reproduction is tops. If you are a staid classicist this music won't appeal to you, but if you are tolerant of the modern idiom it should be just your meat.

Beethoven: Six Ecossaises (B. & H. Series 25, No. 302). One-half side, and **Mendelssohn: Rondo Capriccioso in E major, Op. 14**. Ania Dorfman (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-1020). \$1.31.

Miss Dorfman begins with the gay little Scottish dances entitled *Ecossaises* and then with but a moment's pause launches into Mendelssohn's charming *Rondo Capriccioso in E*. We can see no particular connection between these pieces but this disc provides some most enjoyable piano music expertly played with fine spirit by the talented Miss Dorfman. Reproduction—excellent.

"That Midnight Kiss" Music. José Iturbi (piano). 2-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1344. \$3.

Chopin: Etude in C minor, Op. 10, No. 12 ("Revolutionary").

Albéniz: Malagueña.

Saint-Saëns: Allegro Appassionato, Op. 70.

RCA Victor has recently released the album listed above which contains recordings of the selections that José Iturbi played in the very successful film "That Midnight Kiss." Mr. Iturbi's many admirers will probably be interested in these records whether they have seen the picture or not. They are examples of the great pianist at his best.

ORGAN

Mendelssohn: Sonata No. 6 for Organ, Op. 65. E. Power Biggs playing the organ at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University (New York). 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-324. \$3.50. Also available on LP Microgroove, coupled with **A Bach Recital**. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2076). \$3.85.

The distinguished organist, E. Power Biggs, who has made this outstanding recording, has supplied the

following notes which are included with the present album:

"The present Sonata is really a set of Variations—a distant cousin of the Chorale Partitas of Johann Sebastian Bach, whose music Mendelssohn so admired and so magnificently promoted. The Sonata is based on the Chorale associated with Martin Luther's versified form of the Lord's Prayer. The melody was first published in 1539, but the author is unknown, though it is supposed to have been originally the song of a mountain shepherd."

Mr. Biggs continues with an interesting description of the music that one may read whilst he is listening to these superb records.



HARPSICHORD

Handel: Suite No. 2 in F major. One side, and **Handel: Suite No. 11 in D minor.** Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (AL-AL-23). \$3.85.

From the notes that accompany this disc, we learn that Fernando Valenti was born in New York and that he studied piano under Amparo Iturbi and harpsichord with Ralph Kirkpatrick. Upon his graduation from Yale he began a concert career with concerts in several eastern cities, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Cuba. He has appeared in New York with the Schola Cantorum. The present recordings are Mr. Valenti's first, and Allegro is planning an extensive series if these meet with the approval of American music lovers. We surely believe that they will because this young artist has rare ability and Allegro has captured 'his art with fine fidelity—rendition and reproduction are both excellent.

Mr. Valenti uses a two manual concert grand harpsichord built in 1945 by John Challis.



VIOLIN

Mischa Elman Favorites. Mischa Elman (violin) accompanied by Wolfgang Rosé (piano). 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1328. \$4.

Drigo: *Serenade*.

Gossec: *Gavotte*.

Drdla: *Souvenir*.

Beethoven: *Minuet in G, No. 2*.

Arensky: *Serenade in G, Op. 30, No. 2*.

Cui: *Orientale*.

Mischa Elman has been making records for forty years, and to mark that fact RCA Victor has issued this little anniversary album containing six of this great artist's most popular encores—pieces that anyone may enjoy. Many of us oldtimers will remember them as some of the first selections we ever heard on a phonograph — and played by the brilliant young violinist, Mischa Elman.



DICTION

"I Can Hear It Now" (Vol. II). Edward R. Murrow (narrator). 5-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-881. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4261). \$4.85.

In December 1948 Columbia issued its now famous historical recording *I Can Hear It Now*—an audible document covering world history from the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 until the Japanese surrender on 2 September 1945. And now we have Volume II of *I Can Hear It Now* which begins where the first volume finished and continues until the election of Harry Truman in November 1948.

As was the first volume, the second was prepared by Edward R. Murrow in collaboration with Fred W. Friendly and the narration as before is by Mr. Murrow. The highlights of Volume II are: The Bikini Atom Bomb Test; International War Crimes Trial at Nuremberg; Wedding of Princess Elizabeth; The Assassination of Gandhi; The State of Israel Is Born; The Berlin Airlift; and The 1948 Presidential Campaign. In addition to these world events there are numerous other incidents of lesser general interest such as: Mayor LaGuardia reading the funnies over the radio during the newspaper delivery strike in New York City, and "Babe Ruth Day" at Yankee Stadium in 1947. Interspersed throughout are the voices of men and women who made history during this trying period. Among them may be mentioned Churchill, Baruch, Gromyko, Marshall, Nehru, Masaryk, Tito, Vishinsky, Eleanor Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Dewey, Truman, and Wallace.

The Holy Year of Jubilee. (Written and dramatized by Rev. Thomas V. Liske, S.T.D.). Cast of 35 actors and chorus of 75 voices. The voice of Pope Pius XII, proclaiming the Jubilee, is introduced. 4-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1332. \$6.

This unusual set of records will be of prime importance to all of the devout who are interested in The Holy Year which began on last Christmas Eve. The Rev. Thomas Vincent Liske, S.T.D. of the Chicago Archdiocese has written an interesting and dramatic story of this great festival which is now held every twenty-five years, and with the aid of suitable actors and a splendid chorus has produced this lifelike recording. It begins with the voice of Pope Pius XII giving the proclamation in Latin with a running translation in English. The balance of the story is told in English with appropriate chants in Latin.

Pleasure Dome. An anthology of modern poetry read by its creators and edited by Lloyd Frankenberg. 4-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-877. \$6. Also available on LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4259). \$4.85.

Lloyd Frankenberg, the author of *Pleasure Dome*:

On *Reading Modern Poetry*, stated in his book that to appreciate fully fine poetry one must hear it read. That was impossible in his printed volume and so he arranged this series of recordings. In the present album one will find a series of poems read by their authors. The following outstanding poets are represented: T. S. Eliot, Marianne Moore, E. E. Cummings, William Carlos Williams, Ogden Nash, W. H. Auden, Dylan Thomas, and Elizabeth Bishop.

Space does not permit a list of the score or more poems included in this splendid collection but those interested will find a complete list with short biographies of each of the poets in the notes that accompany this album.

Goethe—His Personality and His Work. (Read in French). Albert Schweitzer (lecturer). Translation by Emory Ross. Available on LP Microgroove only, 2-12" discs in folder. Winchester Set 1-F. \$12.50.

Goethe—His Personality and His Work. (Read in German). Albert Schweitzer (lecturer). Translation by Thornton Wilder. Available on LP Microgroove only, 2-12" discs in folder. Winchester Set 1-G. \$12.50.

The two recordings listed above have rare historic value which should increase as the years go on. Dr. Albert Schweitzer, the distinguished physician-musician-theologian-philosopher came to the United States from French Equatorial Africa to deliver the keynote address at the world Goethe celebration to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the great German poet's birth held at Aspen, Colorado from 27 June until 16 July 1949. It was Dr. Schweitzer's first visit to the United States and the present recording is said to be the first time his voice was ever recorded.

Dr. Schweitzer gave his lecture in both French and German and on each occasion was introduced by Robert M. Hutchins, Chancellor of the University of Chicago. The lecture is, of course, the same in both French and German, and a running translation in English was given at both lectures.

Winchester Records (Chicago) was very successful in recording the lectures as Dr. Schweitzer gave them before the distinguished international audience that had gathered for the celebration. Both Dr. Ross and Mr. Wilder's diction are so fine that it is a joy to listen to. It is not necessary to understand either French or German to appreciate these unique recordings.

As only a very limited number of these recordings are available, we suggest that those who are interested should place their orders for them promptly.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Aseh, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Dcca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, GIOA—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musicraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polydor, RF—Radiofunk, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

John McCormack. By L. A. G. Strong. x+309 pp. Illustrated. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$3.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

The Life and Death of Chopin. By Casimir Wierzyński. Translated by Norbet Guterman with a Foreword by Artur Rubinstein. xvi+444 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Chopin. By Herbert Weinstock. x + 336 + xxii pp. Illustrated. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.

The Wagner Operas. By Ernest Newman. xii+724+v pp. Frontispiece and 550 musical examples. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.85.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS - - - PHILADELPHIA 7, PA., U. S. A.

VOL. 17, NO. 12

FEBRUARY, 1950

By mail to any address
50c per year

With this issue, the seventeenth volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed and the confusion that existed a year ago is gradually becoming less and less—the numbers 78, 33½, and 45 that were whirling around in the minds of record collectors have finally come to rest. RCA Victor has announced that it will begin to issue its classical recordings on LP 33½ r.p.m. discs about 1 March 1950; they will also be available at 45 and 78 r.p.m. for those whose phonographs are not equipped to play LP 33½ discs. RCA Victor instruments are already on the market equipped to play all three speeds.

Thus it would seem to us that collectors of classical records whose phonographs are equipped to play the LP recordings have little or nothing to worry about now that all important American record manufacturers are committed to making LP records. Those collectors who have been waiting to see what RCA Victor would do before they had their instruments equipped to play 33½ r.p.m. discs will probably now lose no time in having the new equipment installed. A new era in the field of recorded music is doubtless beginning and we look for a renewed interest in phonograph records that should be an immense stimulus to the industry. Record business should boom for the balance of 1950 at least.

Record collectors should bear in mind that thousands of 78 r.p.m. discs will be dropped from the catalogs and will be continually more difficult to obtain. Thus, it would seem that those persons, who are interested in recordings by artists who are no longer making records, should secure the recordings that they wish for their collections at this time. Only a very small number of the 78 r.p.m. recordings that are presently available will appear on LP discs. Dealers report that collectors are already combining their stocks, especially their stocks of single

records, for items that very likely will never be available again once these records are dropped from the various catalogs.

Immediately after RCA Victor ran its full-page advertisements announcing its intention to issue LP 33½ r.p.m. recordings we noticed a decided increase in the interest in all recorded music. This interest was indicated by the increase in the number of new subscriptions we have received since that important announcement was made. We are happy to report that our subscription list is larger than it has ever been in our long history.

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. We send renewal blanks with the February issue only, which is the last number of each volume.

* * *

Just as there are persons continually seeking the "Elixir of Everlasting Life," in the record industry there are persons who are seeking to prolong the life of phonograph records. While we generally do not have much faith in the several "snake oil" preparations which purport or have purported to accomplish this, a new liquid has recently been brought to our attention which is worth the investigation, at least, of collectors of the new Long Playing records.

The product is known as Walco "Static-Clean," and the manufacturer claims that it is a "static eliminator and cleaner for all Vinylite and plastic records." Persons with LP discs in their libraries well know how these Vinylite discs attract dust particles, due to the friction-caused static electricity. They know, too, that this static electricity can cause annoying clicks

and snaps in the reproduction. Although these extraneous noises can usually be removed by wiping the record with a damp cloth, they come back again with repeated playings. We have noted that an application of "Stati-Clean" prevents these noises, and precludes the possibility of dust being attracted to plastic discs.

Presumably the effect of "Stati-Clean" will wear off with time, but it held up for 25 plays in one of our tests. However, should the effect be noted to subside, it is a simple matter to re-coat the record with the fluid. "Stati-Clean" is sold in small bottles ("enough to coat 200 records" says the manufacturer) at \$1 each. If your local dealer cannot supply you, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Nearly all issues published during the last sixteen years are available. The price is 5¢ each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 115 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Schumann: *Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 44*. Rudolph Serkin (piano) and the Busch Quartet. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2081). \$3.85. (TNR Mar. '43).

Reger: *Böcklin Suite, Op. 128*. German Philharmonic Orchestra of Prague—Keilberth. 1-10" disc (CL-L-8011). \$3.85. (TNR July '49).

ORCHESTRA



Chopin—orch, Gretchaninov: *Les Sylphides*. One side, and Villa-Lobos: *Uirapuru* (Symphonic Poem). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Efrem Kurtz. LP Micro-groove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4255). \$4.85. *Les Sylphides* also available on 78 rpm, 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-874. \$4.75.

A really fine recording with modern reproduction of *Les Sylphides* is a welcome item, and should enjoy a healthy sale. The last version was by Fiedler and the Boston Pops (Vic. DM-1119) in the Anderson and Bodge orchestration; any previous versions are hardly worth mentioning. Fiedler did a good job and was accorded typical Boston reproduction, which is clear and bright. The new set is even better as far as the conductor's style is concerned and of course, Columbia's recording of the New York Philharmonic's latest efforts has been notably good. The ballet is an enchanting bit of romantic fluff danced to some of Chopin's most familiar music, lushly orchestrated. Played as

music, and without benefit of choreography, it narrows down to pleasant background music for an evening at home with friends, dinner music, or the like. Anyhow, it is lovely, graceful music.

Uirapuru, composed in 1917, tells the story of the legendary enchanted bird, Uirapuru, whom the Indians of Brazil considered the "King of Love." A beautiful Indian maiden shoots him through the heart with a bow and arrow, transforming him into a handsome youth. Later an ugly old Indian, playing a nose-flute, who had previously been beaten by the natives, returns and shoots the youth, who turns again into the beautiful bird which flies away singing its haunting song. This symphonic poem employs a number of native percussion instruments. It marvelously recreates the feeling of a magical Brazilian jungle with its bizarre colors, its impenetrable mystery and its savage poetry.

The music will not appeal to all who are charmed by *Les Sylphides*, for it is not the obvious, melodious type, but rather the vivid, fanciful, and to some ears "modern" type. We found it an interesting tone poem which depicts its story colorfully. The performance and recording are capital. S.

Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet Ballet Suite No. 2, Op. 64. Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Serge Prokofiev. One side, and **Prokofiev: Buffoon Ballet Suite, Op. 21, No. 1.** Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Albert Wolff. LP Micro-groove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6060). \$5.95.

This LP disc may rightly be considered a service to serious record collectors. Nearly every LP record has been a current recording of the best quality its manufacturer can provide. On the present disc we have an example of courage and enterprise—the issuing of some rare material recorded some years ago, and not very well recorded even for its day in the case of the Russian set. Both of these works are major efforts of the great Soviet composer, Prokofiev, and deserves to be on discs.

In the July 1946 issue of THE NEW RECORDS we thoroughly covered the *Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 2* as directed by the composer, the same recording which has been transferred to LP discs by Vox. The music is in seven sections, the titles of which are familiar to anyone acquainted with Shakespeare's celebrated love story. There is plenty of melodic appeal in this music; it is not complicated, and it conveys the emotional aspects of the story very well. We have always found it thoroughly enjoyable and can recommend it highly. The present performance is not exactly charged with inspiration, and the rather corny reproduction does not help matters. Koussevitzky's album of four sections from the suite (Vic. DM-1129) is preferable on all counts except completeness.

For some unexplainable reason no one has, to our knowledge, ever recorded the *Chout Ballet Suite* of Prokofiev, except Albert Wolff, who with the famous Lamoureux Orchestra made it about fifteen years ago for Polydor. It was, for its day, quite a good repro-

duction and is not too hard to take even now, although it leaves much to be desired. The performance by Wolff is very fine. Prokofiev's music to the ballet of "The Buffoon Who Outwitted Seven Other Buffoons" is capital, and for us a completely enjoyable experience. The Suite, No. 1 offers six of the original twelve movements. The story of the ballet is funny and the music suits it well. Here is some contemporary music easy to take.

S.

Stravinsky: Petrouchka. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-130). \$5.95.

When the first English Decca records appeared, several years ago, the full frequency range recording system of reproduction set a new standard, which was the best ever achieved, and to this day remains the best. The recent London single disc of *Danse Macabre* is easily the finest commercial recording ever issued, and all of the English Decca and London records recorded under the *ffrr* system are a thrilling listening experience.

The present LP disc is something new again. This one is not a dubbing of the original *Petrouchka* issued by English Decca as performed by Ansermet and the London Philharmonic. This new one was especially cut for LP recording, and is something which may set new standards. It is of magnificent fidelity, range, timbre, and perspective. Our only criticism is one that is noticeable on many LP's and that is the condition where heavy chords will sound through an adjacent groove. It is only noticed at the beginning where a blank starting groove will emit a faint echo of the first heavy chords. This is a minor matter which Columbia or London will probably manage to overcome, and may even not be noticed by most persons, as it occurs only occasionally.

Ernest Ansermet again shows himself to be one of the greatest conductors by the incomparable reading of *Petrouchka*, which if possible, even surpasses his previous recording. We recently heard him conduct the Philadelphia Orchestra in a program which contained *Petrouchka*, something to be remembered for a lifetime. His broadcast programs with the NBC Orchestra have won him many admirers. Of the various records which the Suisse Romande Orchestra has made, the new *Petrouchka* is their finest effort too; they play like one of the world's top-flight groups. Everyone seemed to be at his best for this disc. S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Kleiber. LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-89). \$4.95.

The principal advantage of this version of the popular Mozart 40th Symphony over Columbia's recent one by Reiner is that in the LP version, Columbia split the second movement between sides—one of the few instances of such a silly practice on their LP records. The new Kleiber one has the first two movements on one side, and the remaining two on the

reverse. As for the reproduction, London's is admittedly better; but Columbia's leaves little to be desired. So far, the balance is in favor of the premium-priced London. When the matter of performance is discussed, there is more room for debate.

Reiner's reading of the work is a distinguished one, not hurried, thoughtful, and carefully worked out. His orchestra plays with excellent precision, and there is beautiful style all the way through (style in Reiner's reading and style in the orchestra's execution). Kleiber most certainly does the score no malice, but he cannot match Reiner when one gets down to fine points. Kleiber is a solid, dependable conductor, but this job appears routine to him. His tempi, except for the first movement, are somewhat faster than Reiner, and his style not quite as elegant. The London Philharmonic is the equal of the Pittsburgh, but they reflect the conductor's wishes. When the London group reflected Beecham's wishes in the older Mozart 40th (Col. MM-316) they turned in a performance that is really hard to beat. On shellac Reiner is the best bet; but on LP it is a toss-up. Despite the second movement break on LP, our preference would be Reiner.

S.

Satie—orch. Debussy: Gymnopédie No. 1. One side, and **Satie—orch. Debussy: Gymnopédie No. 2.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. 1-12" disc (V-12-1060). \$1.31.

We are glad to welcome these modern and excellent recordings of these delightful little selections by Erik Satie which were so exquisitely orchestrated by Debussy.

Satie wrote these pieces when he was but twenty-three, and they contain none of the ironic and whimsical humor of his later compositions. There is about them a certain lovely cathedral atmosphere which is attained by the slow and solemn procession of richly built chords. They introduced in 1889 the harmonic style which definitely took its legitimate rank in music in the masterpieces of Satie's friend, the orchestrator of these works, Claude Debussy.

Stravinsky: Jeu de Cartes—Ballet in Three Deals. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-12" discs in album. Capitol Set FCL-8028. \$6.04. LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (CL-L-8028). \$3.85.

(This annotation is reprinted from the June 1939 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

This suite is derived from the ballet, *The Card Party (Jeu de Cartes): Ballet in Three Deals*, which depicts a poker game following the strict rules of Hoyle. The ballet was commissioned for The American Ballet and its premiere was given by that organization at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, on April 27, 1937. Mr. Lincoln Kirstein, one of the founders of The American Ballet, in a most interesting article in *Modern Music*, describes the action of the ballet as follows:

"Three deals of straight poker are demonstrated played literally according to Hoyle. Sudden apparitions of the Joker to whom these rules do not apply, destroy the logical suits of the three hands. At the end of each deal, giant fingers of otherwise invisible croupiers remove the rejected cards. The opening of each deal is a short processional march or polonaise, which prefaces the shuffling of the pack. For the card-play—deals, passes, bets—there are group dances, solo variations, and finales, according to the familiar uses of classic ballet."

The Berlin Philharmonic gives a fine performance of this work, and the reproduction rates with the very best.

Light Orchestral Favorites. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss, one side, and New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Victor Olof. LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-103). \$5.95.

This LP Disc contains about forty minutes of short selections that are known to all symphonic orchestra fans, nicely played with plenty of spirit by the two orchestras represented on this record. A record that most anyone may enjoy.

The selections are: Hungarian Dances Nos. 1, 3 and 5 (Brahms); Turkish March (Mozart); Toreador et Andalouse (Rubinstein); Berceuse de Jocelyn (Godard); Pas des Fleurs (Delibes); Sabre Dance (Khachaturian); Slavonic Dances Nos. 3, 5 and 8 (Dvorák).

CONCERTO



Mozart: Concerto No. 2 in E-flat major, K. 417. Dennis Brain (horn) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 2-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MX-306. \$3.50. LP Microgroove, coupled with **Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in E-flat, K. 495.** Dennis Brain (horn) with Hallé Orchestra. 1-10" disc (C-ML-2088). \$3.85.

These selections were reviewed from the LP disc that contains both of them. K. 495 was issued by Columbia in an album set (Col. MX-285) in October 1947.

Dennis Brain, the son of the famous British horn player, Aubrey Brain, gives sparkling performances of both of these jolly little concertos for horn and orchestra. Mozart wrote four such concertos for his friend, companion, servant and clerk, Ignaz Leitgeb, who was a noted horn player in the court orchestra at Salzburg. While these works are difficult enough for present-day players, they must have been almost impossible for players such as poor Leitgeb, whose instruments were not equipped with valves and scientifically constructed tuning slides. It is said that Mozart, in a spirit of fun, wrote these pieces with his tongue in his cheek, but to his surprise Leitgeb was able to play them and did so at many concerts. They are delightful little compositions, and the present ones, in the hands of the very accomplished

artist, Dennis Brain, make items that may find welcome places in any record library.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Purcell: Twelve Trio Sonatas (Set I). Henri Merckel and Georges Alès (violins); André Navarra (viola-cello); and Isabelle Nef (harpsichord). Available on LP Microgroove only, 3-12" discs in album. L'Oiseau-Lyre Set OLP-1. \$17.85.

The casual listener will be quick to conclude that this is all very pleasant music, but that it all sounds pretty much alike. In a sense he is right. To the person who understands and appreciates music of the 17th century, however, these trio sonatas have a wealth of variety and invention. If your musical knowledge will carry you that far, the present set will be of great interest to you.

Purcell wrote in all twenty-two Trio Sonatas, in two sets of twelve and ten respectively. The present recording comprises the first set. The number of movements runs from four to seven, all are short, very short as we think of such things today. The first movement is usually slow, the last lively; in between there are the fugal Canzonas and triple-time Largos. The appeal of the sonatas is heightened because they are not cut to any fixed pattern. They have features in common, but there is always the unexpected turn that saves them from being merely repetitive. As Bell, one of Purcell's biographers, said: "Purcell's music may, indeed, sometimes lack mystery, but it is rarely deficient in surprise, even when he seems to trade overmuch on his own formulae."

Written for two violins, viola da gamba, and harpsichord (or organ), the sonatas are here performed by two violins, violoncello and harpsichord, and particular attention has been paid to phrasing, ornaments, rhythms, ritardandos, and tempi in order to present performances of authenticity.

L'Oiseau-Lyre has been noted for many years as a publishing house of high ideals, and they have achieved an admirable accomplishment in the publishing and the recording of the Purcell *Trio Sonatas*. The performances, reproduction, and LP pressings are very fine.

S.

Beethoven: Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 16. Orazio Frugoni (piano), E. Baudo (oboe), M. Druart (clarinet), M. Coursier (French horn), and M. Alard (bassoon). One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Thirty-two Variations in C minor** (Grove's No. 191). Orazio Frugoni (piano). LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (VX-PLP-6040). \$5.95.

Lovers of Beethoven will very likely be delighted to welcome this outstanding LP disc, particularly in view of the fact that neither of the selections it contains are listed in the domestic catalogs.

The *Quintet in E-flat major, Op. 16* dates from Beethoven's early years in Vienna when he was being lionized by the cultured aristocracy of that city of

music. It flows along in a joyous manner, much in the mood of Mozart. It is often likened to that composer's *Quintet in E-flat major*, K. 452, which was written for the same combination of instruments and is in the same key. That Mozart masterpiece, for it is a masterpiece, preceded the present Beethoven work by about a dozen years.

We found the present rendition a veritable joy to listen to—a real gloom chaser, and a piece of music that can't help lifting one from the confusion of the present to heights of spiritual equanimity. The brilliant young pianist, Orazio Frugoni, heads a group of fine players who produce a performance that calls for high praise and the Polydor reproduction (the domestic Vox disc was dubbed from an imported recording) is of outstanding faithfulness. The surfaces are smooth and extremely quiet.

The last half of the second side of this disc contains Beethoven's 32 *Variations in C minor* exquisitely played by Mr. Frugoni. This latter work dates from the period of the *Fifth Symphony* when the composer had turned from the lyric mood of his early works to a much sterner attitude. In it Beethoven says much in a dynamic fashion with very few words—a shining example of what may be accomplished musically within a very limited framework.

We are glad to report that this Vox record was for us one of the most enjoyable LP chamber music discs that has come to our attention. A thoroughly worthwhile item.

R.

Ives: Quartet No. 2. Walden String Quartet: Homer Schmitt and Bernard Goodman (violins); Eugene Weigel (viola); and Robert Swenson (violoncello). LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (Period SPLP-501). \$5.95.

Charles Edward Ives, who was born in Danbury, Connecticut in 1874 is unquestionably a pioneer—it is reported that long before Bartók or Milhaud developed the polytonality for which they are famous, young Ives in 1893 had written a fugue in four keys at once. Ives, after graduating from Yale where he studied composition with Horatio Parker, devoted himself to business so that he would not have to depend upon his music for a living and thus could write just what he wanted to. He did, and his compositions, few of which have been published, are practically unknown except to a relatively small group of musicians who are interested in the composer's daring developments.

The present work is in three movements, marked: "Discussions," "Arguments," and "The Call to the Mountains." To give an insight to his composition, Ives wrote the following on his score: "String Quartet for four men—who converse, discuss, argue (politics), fight, shake hands, shut-up, then walk up the mountain side to view the firmament."

We think that we have written enough to indicate that this recording is only for those who dare to delve into unusual music in the modern idiom.

Prokofiev: Sonata in F minor, Op. 80. Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Joseph Levine (piano). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-875. \$4.75. LP Microgroove, coupled with **Prokofiev: Sonata in D Major, Op. 94.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4257). \$4.85.

Szigeti's recording of the *Sonata in D major*, Op. 94, which occupies the second side of this LP disc, was issued as an album set (Col. MM-620) in August 1946. It received a glowing review in our columns at that time and although the work's appeal is naturally limited, the album has enjoyed a reasonably steady sale.

Opus 94 dates from 1944 and *Opus 80* was started in 1938 but was not completed in its present form until 1946. If you found the former work of interest there is no question but that you will like the latter. Szigeti has been a friend and a strong admirer of Prokofiev's since he introduced the composer's First Violin Concerto at the Prague Festival of the International Society of Contemporary Music in 1924. Certainly no one is better qualified to present Prokofiev's music than Szigeti, and we are fortunate to have these two Sonatas recorded by him.

Schubert: Quartet No. 14 in D minor ("Der Tod und das Madchen"). Fine Arts Quartet of the American Broadcasting Company: Leonard Sorkin and Joseph Stepansky (violins); Sheppard Lehnhoff (viola); and George Sopkin (violoncello). LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (ME-MG-10008). \$4.85.

Here is a nice example of the value of LP records in the chamber music field. This well-beloved quartet of Schubert's is in four movements and the first two fit very nicely on the first side of this disc and the final two fill the second side perfectly—no break in the movements—we hear it just as we would in the concert hall. We might mention that in this recording we are hearing an excellent performance by the very able Fine Arts Quartet, an outstanding group of players, one of the most distinguished American chamber ensembles of our time. Mercury has achieved a highly satisfactory recording from all angles.

Mozart: Sonata No. 34 in B-flat major for Piano and Violin, K. 378. Glaucio d'Attili (piano) and Ruggerio Ricci (violin). One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 10 in C major, K. 330** and **Mozart: Fantasia in D minor, K. 397.** Emma Boynet (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (VX-VLP-6400). \$3.85.

This small LP disc contains a wealth of excellent Mozart chamber music. d'Attili and Ricci give a superb performance of the ever-popular *Sonata No. 34 in B-flat major* and the distinguished pianist, Emma Boynet, turns in highly satisfactory performances of two shorter works, which, although they are not so well-known, are worthy of consideration by all serious music lovers.



OPERA

Great Tenor Arias. Richard Tucker (tenor) with Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-870. \$4.75. LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4248). \$4.85.

Pagliacci—Vesti la giubba

Cavalleria Rusticana—Mamma, quel vino è generoso

Rigoletto—Parmi veder le lagrime

La Forza del Destino—La vita e inferno (recit); O tu che in seno agli angeli (aria)

Aïda—Celeste Aïda.

These admirably sung operatic arias only substantiate what many people now know, and that is that Richard Tucker has one of the finest tenor voices of our day.

Mr. Tucker offers on the LP version arias of the standard repertory—eight in Italian, and two in French. On all of them he lavishes a round, fresh tone, and unusual care in phrasing and attention to the vocal line.

Especially fine is Mr. Tucker's singing of the complete scena—recitative and aria—from Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*. Not since the days when Caruso and Martinelli recorded this dramatic moment has the music been so correctly and mellifluously sung. The tenor also does a good job of *Celeste Aïda*, using Verdi's original low ending (as recently revealed by Toscanini), the voice descending from the high B-flat to a succession of final notes on the octave below—a lovely effect!

The three arias from *Rigoletto* are presented with verve and with an authority that recalls the fact that Mr. Tucker has often appeared in this opera at the Metropolitan. The *M'appari* from *Martha* is also well presented with flowing tone, so much so, that one regrets Mr. Tucker's sobby style towards the close of the aria.

Mr. Tucker's voice weathers the rigors of *Vesti la giubba*, for which, strictly speaking, his voice is on the lyric side. He is better suited to the finale of *Cavalleria*, which he sings beautifully.

The two French arias are less successful. Faulty enunciation of the text is quite noticeable in the recitative to the aria from Bizet's *Pearl Fishers*, and the air itself needs more shading and *mezza-voce* than is at the tenor's command. The aria from *La Juive* suffers in comparison with the memory of Caruso's marvellous record. Mr. Tucker just doesn't have, as yet, the weight of voice or the maturity of feeling for this great scene.

Fausto Cleva, Emil Cooper and Wilfred Pelletier are Mr. Tucker's conductors for this fine record, and the recording is as fine a job as Columbia has ever done. These LP surfaces are among the quietest heard so far.

The arias listed in the heading are the only ones included in the 78 rpm version. Lest our readers wonder why the LP costs more, let us hasten to assure them that on the LP disc, in addition to those arias in the heading, may be found the following arias, previously issued as single 78 rpm discs and reviewed in **THE NEW RECORDS** in August 1948 and October 1949: *Rachel, quand du Seigneur*, from "La Juive"; *A cette voix quel trouble agitait tout mon être* (recit.) & *Je crois entendre encore* (romanza) from "Les Pecheurs de Perles"; *La donna è mobile* and *Questa o quella* from "Rigoletto"; and *M'appari tutt' amor* from "Martha." MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Leoncavallo: Pagliacci—Ballatella: Qual flamma avea nel guardo (Act I). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Massenet: Manon**—Voyons, Manon, plus de chimères (Act I). (Sung in French). Bidú Sayão (soprano) with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra conducted by Pietro Cimara. 1-12" disc (C-72899D). \$1.25. Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-403). \$1.

Miss Sayão sings these lovely little arias with a fine sense of the artistic and we rather believe that this disc will enjoy wide popularity amongst opera lovers. A modern recording of the selection from *Manon* is particularly welcome.

Wagner: Tannhäuser—Elisabeths Gebet: Allmächt'ge Jungfrau, hör mein Flehen! (Act III). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (V-12-1062). \$1.31.

We are pleased to note that this disc, reviewed last month from the imported pressing, is now released by RCA Victor at domestic prices.

CHORAL

Haydn: Missa Solemnis in D minor ("Lord Nelson Mass"). Lissa della Casa (soprano), Elizabeth Höngen (contralto), Horst Taubmann (tenor), and George London (bass) with the Chorus of the Vienna Academy and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Jonathan Sternberg. LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (Haydn Society HSLP-2004). \$5.95.

This is the first of a series of religious masterworks which the Haydn Society will issue to commemorate the Anno Sancto (The Holy Year). The initial choice falls upon this superb "Lord Nelson" Mass, which is enjoying its first recording.

The "Nelson" Mass, written in the incredibly short space between July 10th and August 31st, 1798, is the most dramatic and stunning of all twelve extant Haydn Masses. It is among the most important and significant of the composer's large-scale works.

Woodwinds are not in Haydn scoring, the "Nelson" Mass calling for strings, three trumpets, timpani and an *organo concertante*. Explosive, rhythmic



figures for trumpets and timpani are characteristic of the whole work.

The name of the mass is derived from the intimacy that developed between the composer, Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton in 1799 (a year after the mass was written). Nelson and Lady Hamilton were at the time on a visit to Prince Esterházy in Austria.

The "Nelson" Mass is truly a beautiful composition; each section carries its message, whether through solo or choral writing, with the stamp of baroque vigor and effulgence.

The present recording was accomplished in Vienna during July, 1949. The Vienna Symphony Orchestra and the Akademie Chorus were employed under the direction of a young American conductor, Jonathan Sternberg.

The soloists, of which the soprano and bass have the most work, are Lisa della Casa, soprano; Elizabeth Höngen, alto; Horst Taubmann, tenor; and George London, bass. Miss della Casa has a voice of skylark clarity and her coloratura passages are cleanly executed and exciting. Mr. London is a young bass from Hollywood, U.S.A., who is, at present, enjoying a fantastic success in Vienna.

The recording is clear and the surfaces smooth and quiet.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Bloch: Avodath Hakodesch. (Sung in English). Marko Rothmuller (bass-baritone), Dorothy Bond (soprano), Doris Cowan (contralto), London Philharmonic Choir directed by Frederick Jackson and the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ernest Bloch. LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LP-123). \$5.95.

Ernest Bloch, the composer, has supplied detailed notes on the five sections of this momentous work. They are printed on the envelope which contains this LP disc. In the introduction, Mr. Bloch states:

"The 'Service' is a setting of Hebrew texts used in the Reform Temples of America. Most of them belong to the Sabbath morning service, and they originate from the Psalms, Deuteronomy, Exodus, Isaiah, Proverbs and other sources of Jewish spiritual patrimony. These texts embody the essence of Israel's aspirations and its message to the world. Though Jewish in its roots, this message seems to me above all a gift of Israel to the whole of mankind. It symbolises for me more than a 'Jewish Service,' for, in its great simplicity and variety, it embodies a philosophy acceptable to all men.

"Musically, the work falls into five parts, following the liturgy, the whole to be performed without interruption. The occasional short preludes and interludes were intended to replace the so-called 'responsive readings,' and to allow the people, instead, to fall into silent meditation and prayer, thus connecting, also, the several moods of the text itself and giving them unity."

The complete text of the "Service," which is sung in English, will be found on a separate leaflet which is supplied with this disc. Christians will very likely

be surprised to hear portions of this text that will be familiar to them through having heard them in their own churches. Bloch has supplied a deeply religious and highly inspiring musical setting for the text which cannot help moving anyone who has even the slightest feeling for the spiritual, whether he be Jewish or non-Jewish. To hear this work is to enjoy a musical experience that will lift one above the merely material things of this life.

The soloists, the chorus and the orchestra give a seemingly inspired performance under the direction of the composer.

R.

Britten: A Ceremony of Carols. RCA Victor Chorale of Women's Voices conducted by Robert Shaw, with Laura Newell (harp). 3-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1324. \$4.75.

A Ceremony of Carols consists of a Procession, nine carols, and a Recession, for treble voices with harp accompaniment. Midway in the work is an Interlude for harp. We are told that we are to imagine a boys' choir coming up the aisle of a church singing the unaccompanied plain chant antiphon for the Magnificat of Christmas Day. Then follows six carols, the harp interlude, three more carols and finally the choir retires singing the same chant with which it entered. The carols for the most part are in Old English and the text of each is printed on the inside cover of the album. Britten's appropriate musical settings give the entire work a flavor of an age-old religious festival. For those persons who like to turn their minds back to ages long past, the rare simplicity of these selections and their evident sincerity will be found to be utterly charming and rewarding.

Robert Shaw has gathered together a fine group of female singers for this recording and his intelligent and sympathetic direction indicates that he has carefully studied the composer's intentions. The results that he has attained deserve our highest praise. Miss Newell supplies excellent accompaniments and is heard to advantage in the harp solo which takes a full side of one of these discs.

VOCAL

A Treasury of French Song. Martial Singher (baritone) with instrumental accompaniments. 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-878. \$4.75. LP Microgroove, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4258). \$4.85.

This Columbia LP record affords an excellent cross-section of the art of one of the most distinguished of present-day French singers, Martial Singher.

Mr. Singher, a member of the Paris Opera and later of the Metropolitan, is also an excellent recitalist, not always a characteristic of opera singers in general.

Here we find 17 songs from the French concert repertory. Many of them, like Massenet's *Elégie*, Hahn's *Si Mes Vers Avaient des Ailes*, J. B. Fauré's *Les Rameaux*, and Gounod's *Sérénade* are well known, and have been often recorded by other artists in the past.



But there are songs which do not appear on programs every day in the week. An *Ave Maria* by Gabriel Fauré is a rarity, and is lovely in its exquisite simplicity. Henri Busser's *Notre Père Qui Est aux Cieux* is another rarely heard song, and is filled with a devotional atmosphere.

Levade's charming *Les Vieilles de Chez Nous*, Chabrier's *Ballade des Gros Dindons* and *Villanelle des Petits Canards* all serve to show Mr. Singher in a lighter vein.

Sometimes the texture of the baritone's voice is a little thick for the music he sings, *L'Invitation au Voyage* by Duparc, for instance. But diction and phrasing are Gallic vocal art at its best, and Mr. Singher is a sincere and honest performer.

You will find Caplet's *Viens, Une Flute Invisible* and Remberg's *Chant Hindou* interesting items on Mr. Singher's bill-of-fare.

Mr. Singher is accompanied by John La Montaine (piano) and Marcel Hubert (violoncello) on the following songs in this album: Massenet: *Elégie*; Remberg: *Chant Hindou*; J. B. Fauré: *Les Rameaux*; G. Fauré: *Ave Maria*; Levade: *Les Vieilles de Chez Nous*. He is accompanied by John La Montaine and Ross Norwood (flute) on the following: Gounod: *Sérénade*; Caplet: *Viens, Une Flute Invisible*; Busser: *Notre Père Qui Est Aux Cieux*. In addition to the above numbers, M. Singher is heard, on the LP version only, in the following, accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano): Martini: *Plaisir d'Amour*; Hahn: *Si Mes Vers Avaient des Ailes*; Hahn: *Paysage*; G. Fauré: *Après un Rêve*, Op. 7, No. 1; Duparc: *L'Invitation au Voyage*; G. Fauré: *Nell*, Op. 18, No. 1; Massenet: *Pensée d'Automne*; Chabrier: *Ballade des Gros Dindons*; and Chabrier: *Villanelle des Petits Canards*.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Song Recital: Lotte Lehmann (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1342. \$4.

While seven songs hardly constitute a recital, as this little album of songs by Lotte Lehmann is entitled, it is always a banner day when new records by this beloved and distinguished singer appear.

Mme. Lehmann has chosen four French songs and three by Richard Strauss for this little group. She is in incredibly good voice, and she sounds like the Lehmann of old in these selections.

While not famous for French songs, Mme. Lehmann has demonstrated before this that a real artist need not be limited by language nor the style imposed by a language with which she is not generally associated.

To hear Mme. Lehmann sing such things as Reynaldo Hahn's *Infidélité* and *L'Enamourée* is an unalloyed joy. Equally lovely are her renditions of Duparc's stunning and grandiose *La Vie Antérieure*, and Paladilhe's charming *Psyché*. The singer's diction and feeling for the text are just as searching and profound as it is in German lieder.

None of the Strauss songs are in present-day record catalogues. Ranging, in point of composition, from 1882 to 1888, they are delightful choices. That Mme. Lehmann sings them eloquently goes without saying.

Paul Ulanowsky is present, at the piano, and the recording is representative of to-day's techniques.

The contents of this album are: Paladilhe's *Psyché*; Hahn's *L'Enamourée* and *Infidélité*; Duparc's *La Vie Antérieure*; and three songs by Richard Strauss: *Die Zeitlose*; *Wozu noch, Mädchen*; and *Du Meines herzens Krönelein*.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Beethoven Settings of Irish and Scotch Songs. Helen Traubel (soprano) with trio accompaniment: Coenraad V. Bos (piano), John Pennington (violin) and Warwick Evans (violoncello). 5-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-869. \$6.04. LP Micro-groove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2085). \$3.85.

A couple of years ago Concert Hall issued an album of Beethoven Irish Songs by Richard Dyer-Bennet (tenor) with instrumental trio. It was very well received and enjoyed a rather wide sale for an item of its character. Now Columbia presents its album by Helen Traubel, which includes both Irish and Scotch songs. None of the songs that Miss Traubel sings are duplicated in the Concert Hall album, thus the present item is entirely new and should be of great interest to those persons who are making a collection of Beethoven recordings.

The titles of the songs in the present Columbia album are: *Robin Adair*; *The Lovely Lass of Inverness*; *Sad and Luckless Was the Season*; *Sally in Our Alley*; *The Soldier*; *Oh Harp of Erin*; *Charley Is My Darlin'*; *Oh Might I But My Patrick Love*; *Faithful Johnny*; and *Auld Lang Syne*.

For those who are not familiar with these charming little songs that Miss Traubel sings so felicitously on these discs, the following information will probably be of interest.

In 1707, when Scotland joined England in the Union of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland, there was established a "Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufacturers in Scotland." In 1785, George Thomson became its secretary. He was a cultured gentleman much interested in the folk music of his country. He gathered together a large number of Scottish folk songs to which he added some Welsh and Irish ballads. These he sent to Haydn, asking him to arrange proper accompaniments for them. Haydn supplied accompaniments for some of them, but his failing health prevented him from completing his task. Thomson then turned to Beethoven, and after much correspondence, and some quibbling about the fee for the work, the task was accomplished, and the first volume was published in Edinburgh in 1814.

Beethoven took the original melodies and supplied instrumental trio accompaniments with the voice taking the fourth part to make a quartet. Viewing them

in that light these little pieces are intensely interesting and worthy of the attention of all Beethoven students.

Songs of Tosti. Giuseppe Valdengo (baritone) with the New Promenade Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. LP Microgroove only, 1-10" disc (L-LPS-116). \$4.95.

It seems only yesterday that everyone sang Paolo Tosti's songs. Every late-Victorian and Edwardian drawing-room had a volume of the composer's facile melodies on its piano-rack, and such great artists as Melba, Caruso, Patti, and de Gogorza were not above recording Tosti sings.

To-day, Tosti has gone out of fashion. Not even his celebrated *Good-Bye* is sung by current, well-known singers. This neglect is not deserved, for Tosti understood and loved the voice, and knew how to write for it. Some of his compositions are frankly sentimental, but many of them have a charm of their own.

Sir F. Paolo Tosti was born in the Abruzzi, Italy, in 1846; he died in Rome in 1916, a man of international fame. Much of his life was spent in England, where he was knighted in 1908. He was a friend of most of the celebrated singers of his day, as well as a favorite of royalty.

This little recital features some of Tosti's best songs. *La Serenata* and *Aprile* were part of the Edwardian prima-donna's repertoire, and *L'Ultima Canzone* and *La Mia Canzone* were favorites of Caruso. *Ideale* is one of the composer's best songs.

Giuseppe Valdengo, now very active at the Metropolitan, sings these numbers smoothly, and with a rich, manly tone. He is not a particularly subtle singer, and perhaps he lacks the distinction which was a feature of the singers of Tosti's day; nevertheless, these are satisfactory performances, and the recording, accomplished in London, is excellent and beautifully balanced. There are instances here, where the orchestration is too elaborate for the song. Tosti's songs were essentially simple.

Signor Valdengo renders the following songs on this LP disc: *La Mia Canzone*; *'A Vucchella*; *La Serenata*; *T'Amo Ancora*; *Aprile*; *Ideale*; and *L'Ultima Canzone*.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

The Good Old Songs. Charles Kullman (tenor) with male quartet accompanied by Charles Touchette (piano). 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-871. \$4.99. LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2090). \$3.85.

Incongruous is certainly the term that best describes this set of recordings. Here we have Barber Shop Quartet Favorites sung with the seeming dignity of the Metropolitan Opera. These renditions are not one thing nor another—they are certainly not operatic and if they are intended to be Barber Shop harmony they fall far short of being much in that field. We don't know whose idea it was to have the very able operatic artist, Charles Kullman, join

with a male quartet in singing *In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree*, but whoever thought that one up should stop thinking altogether.

The other selections on which Mr. Kullman has wasted his time are: *In the Gloaming*; *Down by the Old Mill Stream*; *Moonlight Bay*; *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*; *Carry Me Back to Old Virginny*; *Sweet Adeline*; and *Secrets*.

A Song Jamboree. Nelson Eddy (baritone) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-873. \$4.99. LP Microgroove, 1-10" disc (C-ML-2091). \$3.85.

The subtitle of this album is "Eight Genial Joyous Character Song Novelties," and that just about describes it perfectly. Nelson Eddy is noted for his robust singing of such songs and some of them are always to be found on his concert programs. His genial joyous singing is infectious and listeners soon catch Mr. Eddy's spirit and enjoy listening just about as much as he seems to enjoy singing. Here's a group of songs to put most anyone in a mighty happy mood.

The selections are: *The Wreck of the Julie Plante*; *Tower of Babel*; *The Cork Leg*; *Captain Stratton's Fancy*; *Riders in the Sky*; *The Laughing Song*; *Sailormen*; and *Shadrack*.

Kern: Showboat (excerpts). Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone) with orchestra conducted by John Scott Trotter. 3-10" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1341. \$4.

Dorothy Kirsten and Robert Merrill of the Metropolitan Opera turn their attention to Jerome Kern's greatest hit "Show Boat." Their renditions of these well-known selections are not what we would call brilliant but at least they are satisfactory. If we were going to select an album of excerpts from "Show Boat," we would choose the Columbia set (MM-611) which numbers in its cast Carol Bruce and Kenneth Spencer.

The selections in the present album are: *Make Believe*; *Ol' Man River*; *You Are Love*; *Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man*; *Why Do I Love You?*; and *Bill*.

Annie Laurie (trad.—arr. Lehmann). One side, and **Jeffreys: Mary of Argyle**. Christopher Lynch (tenor) accompanied by Eugene Bossart (piano). 1-10" disc (C-4571M). \$1.05. Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-301). \$1.

The popular Irish tenor, Christopher Lynch, sings these well-known ballads with a lilt that should please his many admirers.

Lehár: Vilia (from "The Merry Widow"). One side, and **Rubinstein: If You Were Mine** (based on "Romance in E-flat, Op. 44, No. 1"). Jeanette MacDonald (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 1-10" disc (V-10-1512). \$1.05.

Jeanette MacDonald has the knack of making pleasing recordings of such selections as will be found

on the present disc. We regret that her name appears so infrequently on RCA Victor's lists of new releases. If her new disc enjoys a wide sale, and we believe that it will, perhaps more will be forthcoming. The selection from "The Merry Widow" is, of course, well-known—*If You Were Mine* is from the M-G-M picture "The Sun Comes Up."

di Capua: O Sole Mio. One side, and **Leoncavallo: Mattinata.** Mario Lanza (tenor) with orchestra conducted by Ray Sinatra. 1-12" disc (V-12-1106). \$1.31.

One of the musical finds of 1949 was the brilliant young tenor, Mario Lanza, and RCA Victor reports that he was the best selling singer on its Red Seal list during the year just passed. The present disc has just been released as a "National Special." As both selections are well-known and universally liked, it would seem Mr. Lanza's latest record should enjoy a tremendous sale.

Rodgers: Bali H'ai (from "South Pacific"). One side, and **Stewart: Give Me Your Hand.** Ezio Pinza (bass) with orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 1-10" disc (C-4588M). \$1.05. Microgroove, 1-7" disc (C-3-397). \$1.

We can't get very much excited about this one—certainly Pinza could find many operatic arias that really need recording.



PIANO

Dohnányi: Suite en Valse, Op. 39a. Ernst von Dohnányi and Edward Kilenyi (pianos). 3-12" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-868. \$4.75. LP Microgroove, coupled with **Dohnányi Waltz Settings.** Edward Kilenyi (piano). 1-12" disc (C-ML-4256). \$4.85.

We reviewed these selections from the LP disc which contains both of them.

Dohnányi is equally brilliant as a composer, pianist and conductor. He is represented on this LP disc in a threefold capacity—as composer of the charming *Suite en Valse*, as one of the two pianists in the same composition, and as remarkably creative arranger of other men's music (Delibes' *Naiad*—Waltz and Schubert's *Valses Nobles*, Op. 77) in the *Dohnányi Waltz Settings*. Dohnányi's distinguished pupil, Edward Kilenyi, is at the second piano in the *Suite en Valse*, and he is the soloist in the *Dohnányi Waltz Settings*.

Of particular interest is the *Suite en Valse*, a kind of symphonic suite for two pianos in four sections named: *Valse Symphonique*; *Valse Sentimentale*; *Valse Boîteuse*; and *Valse de Fête*. This Suite is not only fascinating from a structural point of view but it makes mighty pleasant listening—anyone who likes melody may easily enjoy it. It should have a very wide appeal. In *Dohnányi Waltz Settings*, the composer has taken well-known waltz tunes and developed

them into excellent pieces for solo piano.

Both of these selections are brilliantly played and most faithfully recorded.

Bach: Partita No. 1 in B-flat major. One side, and **Bach: Partita No. 2 in C minor.** Rosalyn Tureck (piano). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-AL-18). \$4.85.

With the release of the present LP disc, Allegro is launching a project which is a most ambitious one to say the least. It is Allegro's intention to record and issue all of the works that make up Bach's Clavierübung of which the Partitas played by Miss Tureck are the first two. The Clavierübung consists of four parts and was issued serially from 1726 to 1742.

We presume that Miss Tureck will record the additional four partitas which, with the ones she has recorded, will make the six that form Part I of the Clavierübung. If Allegro issues the work in the order that Bach published them, the Partitas should be followed by the *Italian Concerto* and the *French Overture*, then a great number other compositions with the famous "Goldberg Variations" as the grand finale. If the quality of the first disc in this series is maintained, music lovers may look forward to a really great collection of Bach recordings.

Brahms: Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 5. Julius Katchen (piano). LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (L-LLP-122). \$5.95.

A few months ago Vox issued a recording of this Sonata on an LP disc played by Shura Cherkassky and now we have another by the brilliant young American pianist, Julius Katchen. Mr. Katchen was born in West End, New Jersey in 1926. At the age of eleven he appeared with the Philadelphia Orchestra; his New York debut took place in 1938. After graduating from Haverford College, he was awarded a French government scholarship in philosophy. While in France he gave a number of very successful recitals. He returned to America in 1947 and his concert at Carnegie Hall on November 9th of that year was greeted with acclaim by the critics. Unquestionably Katchen is one of America's greatest young pianists. His performance of the present Sonata will surely indicate that.



BAND

Modern Band Festival. Leeds Concert Band conducted by Peter Todd. LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (C-ML-4254). \$4.85.

One would certainly have to be very fond of all kinds of band music to take this LP disc at one sitting. We never heard such a conglomeration. The only similarity is that all of the pieces are played by the Leeds Concert Band—a not overly large organization which we presume takes its name from the important industrial city in the north of England.

Nearly every kind of music a brass band can play is included on this *unique* disc. A stirring march by the American composer, Edwin Franko Goldman, is followed by a *Doxology* with chime effects by a composer unknown to us by the name of Leiden, then comes a low down number entitled *Deep Blues*; Tansman's *Carnival Suite* follows this and if you haven't got musical indigestion by that time, you may listen to a half-dozen or more assorted selections including Kabalevsky's *Comedians' Gallop*, Henry Cowell's *Hymn and Fuguing Tune No. 1*, *Wilderness Road* by Elie Siegmeister and, for a dash of Latin-American rhythms, a Cuban tune called *Canto Yoruba*.

In reviewing recordings for the last twenty years, we have come across some strange mixtures but this beats anything that has ever come our way. We felt sort of seasick before one side of this disc was half through and just sampled the balance by lifting the needle and taking very small doses of the rest of the selections.

VIOLIN



Bartók—arr. Székely: *Roumanian Folk Dances Nos. 1-6*. Yehudi Menuhin (violin) accompanied by Marcel Gazelle (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-1061). \$1.31.

These spirited little folk selections are played in fine style by one of our most talented fiddlers—much of Bartók's music has a very limited appeal but these little pieces should be attractive to most anyone.

Wieniawski: Mazurka in D major, Op. 19, No. 2.

One side, and **Stravinsky: Russian Maiden Song**. Nathan Milstein (violin) accompanied by Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (V-12-1017). \$1.31.

The very talented Nathan Milstein tosses off these delightful selections in his best style. Lovers of fine violin playing will get a big thrill.

VIOLONCELLO



Bach: Suite No. 4 in E-flat. Six sides, and **Bach: Suite No. 5 in C minor**. Pablo Casals (violoncello). Five sides, and **Bach—trans. Siloti and Casals: Adagio** (from "Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C"). Pablo Casals (violoncello) accompanied by Nicolai Mednikoff (piano). 7-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1302. \$9.75.

(This annotation is reprinted from the November 1948 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

Volume Eight of the Bach Society completes the series of six unaccompanied 'cello sonatas (or suites) by the renowned Casals. For 'cellists this set will be thrice welcomed, and for those who admire Casals likewise. The untold hours that Casals must have spent through the years to master this difficult music

is staggering. He justly deserves the world's acclaim for the accomplishment. For one who does not care for the music itself, this reviewer admits that Casals' playing surpassed the music and compelled attention—more, it was a unique experience. That so much musical beauty can be extracted from an unaccompanied 'cello is a revelation by comparison to the welter of tone we usually hear from orchestras and other ensembles.

The greatness of Casals, then, is undeniable; but we cannot believe that the music which Bach wrote is as great as the man who plays it on these records. Those who bow to the name Bach will recoil at such a thought; however, the content of the music has eluded some brilliant minds, and the apparent greatness seems to stem from the miraculous patterns which Bach wrote and little else. Casals has certainly applied great freedom to his interpretation of this music, thereby making it very palatable, even interesting and absorbing. Bach may have conceived it thus; if so, he is mighty fortunate in having Casals perpetuate it permanently on records. No composer could be accorded more exquisite artistry.

S.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Das Wohltemperierte Clavier ("The Well-Tempered Clavier") (Book I). (Preludes and Fugues Nos. 1 to 8). Wanda Landowska (harpsichord). 6-12" discs in album. RCA Victor Set DM-1338. \$8.50.

It has been rumored for some time that Mme. Landowska has been at work on a recording of the famous "Forty-Eight," and it will be a real joy to music lovers everywhere to know that the great task has been accomplished and that the initial volume containing the first eight is now available. Upon completing the recording Mme. Landowska is reported to have said, "I have been studying Bach for half a century and my records of the 'Forty-Eight' represent the very best I can offer."

It is not necessary to add anything to the great artist's statement. Mme. Landowska is a musician of the highest integrity and her artistic standards are such that if the present recording satisfies her, we are very sure that it will satisfy the most critical music lover.

The value of these records will be greatly enhanced when Mme. Landowska's complete notes and analyses of the *Well-Tempered Clavier* are available. We understand that they will be published in book form within the next few months.

MISCELLANEOUS



Music for the Virginal. Suzanne Bloch (virginal). Available on LP Microgroove only, 1-12" disc (AL-AL-28). \$4.85.

The selections which Miss Bloch plays on this LP

disc were taken from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book. This unique volume contains 220 folios of paper ruled by hand for music in 6 line staves on which have been copied 291 separate pieces by the greatest composers of the time. This book is considered to contain the most valuable collection of 17th century English music extant. Among the composers included are: Byrd, Bull, Morley, Munday and Richardson. The book takes its name from the fact that it was included in a collection of music, books and paintings that were left to Cambridge University by Richard, Viscount Fitzwilliam upon his death in 1816.

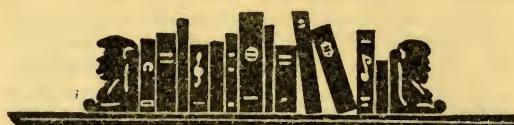
Just a word or two about the instrument on which these selections are played. The virginal is a small keyboard instrument having for each note one string only and plucked by means of a quill attached to a jack. The particular instrument used for these recordings (there are thirteen short selections on this LP disc) is called the Ottavina Virginal. It is the smallest type with four octaves within the light range of the four foot register of the harpsichord. Changes of color are impossible as there are no pedals or coupling possibilities. However, the inventiveness of the music is such that as one goes from selection to selection one is hardly aware that the registration is unchanged.

For the collector of recordings of music of another age this unique disc should hold great interest.

Modern Music for Clarinet. Artie Shaw (clarinet) with orchestra conducted by Walter Hendl. 4-10" discs in album. Columbia Set MM-865. \$4.99. LP Microgroove, 1-1/2" disc (C-ML-4260). \$4.85.

Artie Shaw is known world-wide as a swing musician, but recently he has been devoting his attention to classical literature for his instrument, the clarinet, and in the present album he presents some works by modern composers in that category. We feel very sure that discerning music lovers will quickly realize that Mr. Shaw is a musician of high calibre when they listen to these outstanding recordings. Unquestionably the present album will have a limited appeal but for those who are interested in it, it will prove to be a very important item.

The contents of this album are: Ravel: *Pièce en forme de Habañera*; Milhaud: *Corcovado* (No. 7 from "Saudades do Brazil"); Debussy: *Petite Pièce*; Poulenc: *Valse* (from "Album des Six"); Shostakovich: *Prelude*, Op. 34, No. 17; Granados: *Andaluza* (No. 4 of "Danzas Espanolas"); Kabalevsky: *A Short Story*; and Gould: *Guajira*. In addition to the above, the LP version contains the following popular selections: *The Man I Love*; *Mood in Question*; *Rendezvous for Clarinet and Strings*; and *I Concentrate on You*.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$9.75.

John McCormack. By L. A. G. Strong. x+309 pp. Illustrated. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$3.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor. 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$5.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.50.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

The Wagner Operas. By Ernest Newman. xii+724+v pp. Frontispiece and 550 musical examples. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$5.85.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer A—Aech, AL—Allegro, BL—Bibliotone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CON—Continental, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DG—Deutsche Grammophon, DI—Disc, G10A—Gregorian Inst. of America, HW—Hargall, IRCC—International Record Collector's Club, L—London Gramophone, ME—Mercury, MU—Musierraft, NCS—National Catholic Sound Recording Specialists, OL—L'Oiseau-Lyre, PA—Parlophone, PAT—Pathé, PC—Paraclete, PD—Polyder, RF—Radiofunkens, SL—Schirmer's Library, T—Telefunken, TE—Technicord, V—Victor, VX—Vox, and W—Woodwind.